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THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

A Study in the THEOLOGY OF FELLOWSHIP

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TO ALL WHO LOVE

'RICHMOND'

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The Christian Experience

I

FOREWORDS

THERE are great numbers of people in the world to-day who claim that they live in fellowship with Jesus Christ. There have been such people for almost two millenniums. An increasing number of students of religion think that this fellowship is the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity. At the least it is one of the principal phenomena of the Christian faith. It is the purpose of this book to look a little at this phenomenon.

To examine the phenomenon exhaustively would require a library. A Christian's fellowship with Christ, like all other forms of fellowship, is primarily psychological. Its full explanation, therefore, would mean the setting out of a complete system of psychology. Again, as every one knows, the problems of psychology lead on to the problems of philosophy. To-day it is admitted by most Christian thinkers that Christianity must justify itself at the bar of philosophy ; this applies to the present subject as well as to others. Not a few theologians, therefore, are beginning to contribute to a theology that is both psychological and philosophical. A small contribution is here attempted. Yet there is little technical psychology or philosophy. The book is an experiment in analogy In other words, it tries to show that the phenomena

of the Christian experience harmonize with other psychological phenomena. It is usually content to draw parallels. Too often the phenomena of 'the Christian life' have been treated as though they were a sort of *monstrum*, or at least as exceptional,—as something that had no relation to the other phenomena of personal life. They have been treated in this way both by friends and enemies. Here there is an attempt to show, on the contrary, that they are analogous with other experience, that they 'fall into line' with the rest of human life, that they even bring the experience of man to a climax and consummation. As the phenomena in question have been defined as a form of fellowship, the most frequent analogies are taken from other kinds of fellowship. Yet it would be unnatural to restrict the investigation to this particular set of phenomena, for fellowship does not exist *in vacuo*, but is part of human life as a whole. Often, therefore, other psychological facts are quoted, as well as those of fellowship. Occasionally, too, a wider sweep still is taken, and phenomena that are not psychological are called into service. The main purpose of the book, however, is to show that the Christian experience harmonizes with the rest of human experience, and completes it. It seems to the writer that the truth of the Christian experience can neither be accepted nor denied alone.

The discussion falls into three parts, and follows the scientific order. For all sciences to-day seek first to describe their particular sets of phenomena, then to set out their implicates, and finally to examine the validity of the postulates on which they have all

the time built. There was a time when the last task would have been placed first, and logically this seems the right order, but it is not the order of science. Astronomy, for instance, first examines the phenomena of the stars, then draws out the ' laws ' or uniformities that ' explain ' the phenomena, and then, last of all, asks and strives to answer the question, ' What is light ? ' Yet all the while it has postulated that there is such a thing as light. Similarly, the last task of the biologist is to seek to define the ' life ' that he has all the while assumed, and the last task of the psychologist to set himself the question, ' What is this " mind " without which I should have had no phenomena to examine at all ? ' Every study must assume something ' to start with,' and it is found that the best time to examine these assumptions is at the end of the study, and not at its beginning, for the whole study sheds light on the problem. This order, therefore, is followed here. The first part of the book seeks to describe the Christian experience ; the second to draw out its chief implicates ; the appendix raises the question of its ' validity.'

Two comments need to be added at this point. The first is that, while this division of the subject is convenient, it is not absolute. In this science, as in all others, it is not possible to draw a clear-cut distinction between ' description ' and ' implication.' The first involves the second, as well as the second the first. The line drawn between the first and second parts of the book is therefore more or less arbitrary. It will be found that, with some exceptions, the first part deals with questions that arise explicitly in the New

Testament, while the second deals with those that are implicit in it. For the New Testament is a collection of practical books, and it is busy with the Christian life and not with its theoretical systematization. In other words, it contains rather the materials for a theology than a theology itself.

The second comment relates to the third part of the book. This is treated as an appendix, and is of a very tentative and incomplete nature. There are two chief reasons. The first is that the examination of the validity of the Christian experience is not part of the purpose of the book, though it is closely related to it. The second is that the questions at issue in this examination do not seem to the writer to be as yet clearly defined. More is said of this in the appendix itself. Here a certain *caveat* is needed. Critics may say, 'Well, if there is any unanswered difficulty about your fundamental postulate, the science that you raise upon it is no science at all. Fancy building a system on a hesitation!' An answer may be found by carrying further a comparison already suggested. Expert physicists differ greatly about the answer to the question, 'What is light?'—yet astronomy is not therefore deemed worthless. Similarly, there is no agreement whatever among biologists about the 'nature of life.' Rather they say, 'Life is a mystery that we are not yet able even to begin to explain; we can only describe how it behaves.' Yet there is no proposal, because of this confession, to jettison the sciences of botany and zoology. Or, again, how various are the answers of expert psychologists to the query, 'What is mind?' Yet their differences

do not mean that psychology is not to be treated as a serious science. The truth, of course, is that men have direct experience of processes, not of the things that underlie processes, and that mysteries about the latter do not invalidate the truth of the former. Surely theology is not to be the only science that is allowed no mysteries. It involves the two greatest mysteries of all—the nature of man and the nature of God—and it involves these two in combination. It may therefore claim that at least the same measure shall be meted out to it as to other sciences, and that conclusions drawn from the examination of processes shall not be rejected merely because there are unsolved mysteries in postulates.

Further, when the Christian experience is treated as a psychological phenomenon, this adds the mysteries of psychology to those of theology. For instance, we have said that the Christian lives a life of fellowship with Christ. What is 'fellowship,' in this or any other instance? In it two or more persons become more or less one, yet at the same time remain separate. Psychology can say so much about it, but no more. Or, again, we talk often of people 'influencing' each other. What is 'influence'? In it one 'personality' somehow 'gets at' another 'personality' and makes a difference to it. So much can be said, but hardly more. Both these examples suggest a wider phenomenon. Until not very long ago, many assumed that 'persons' were 'naturally' 'individual,' and only 'social' through artificial conventions. To-day the psychologist asserts that 'societies' are just as 'natural' phenomena as 'individuals,' and that man

is both 'societary'—if a quite distinctive word, that is beginning to come into use, may be allowed[1]—and 'individual.' No one can yet say how both these things can be true, yet it is certain that they are. It follows that the experiences of persons, however merely 'individual' they may superficially seem, yet owe something in reality to the society of which the person who experiences them forms a part. This is the general assumption of psychologists, even though they are unable as yet to define the relation of the individual to society. It is agreed that the two imply each other, and that they do so in such a way that both contribute to any given experience. But a further question follows. In the most familiar instances, the experience is primarily that of the individual, and the part played in it by the society of which he is a part is quite secondary. May this relation be reversed? May a 'society' have an experience, and, if so, what is the relation of the individuals that compose the society to that experience?

These questions cannot be finally answered until we are able to answer another: 'What is a society?' And here too, of course, psychologists differ widely. Still, there is a growing consensus of opinion that a society is not a mere arithmetical collection of individuals. Not a few add that in some sense it has a 'reality' of its own, as distinct from that of the individuals that compose it. While some hold that its 'reality' is independent of that of its members, and others that

[1] The adjective 'social' is too ambiguous for the purposes of discussions that follow.

it is dependent upon this, they agree that this mysterious ' reality ' exists. It is assumed below that this truth holds of religious societies as of others. In particular, it is assumed that the Christian Church, as a society, has experience of ' God in Christ.' In other words, the fellowship of Christ is an experience not only of the individual Christian, but of the Christian society. Once more, while there are here many unresolved psychological problems, the fact that they are unresolved is not peculiar to this instance. It belongs to the whole class of phenomena called ' societies,' and, just as it does not forbid the study of other societies and their experience, so it admits the study of this one and its experience. Again, a society, like an individual, may have a continuous though variable experience. The single Christian's fellowship with Christ on earth may last fifty years ; the Christian Church's fellowship with Christ has already lasted some nineteen centuries. And behind it there stretches the Hebrew people's experience of the fellowship of ' Jahveh,' the evolving embryo of the Christian type. It is plain, therefore, that psychological mysteries surround the present study as well as theological ones. The course taken about them is that taken in many psychological works. In spite of the difficulty of explaining such things as ' personality,' ' fellowship,' ' influence,' ' society,' these things are facts, and are assumed as such. Their explanation belongs to psychology. In the past, theology has too often usurped tasks that belong to other studies. It must shun the temptation to do so now. At the same time, since the study of the

experience of societies in general is still at so elementary a stage, the investigation below treats chiefly of the Christian experience as it occurs in individual Christians, and only incidentally of the experience of the Christian society.

Both parts of the book seek to prepare the way for a theology of experience. The writer believes that there may be such a theology, and that it is the kind of theology needed to-day. He hopes, therefore, that such a theology may be developed, and he has tried to make some suggestions towards its integration. There is no attempt, however, at a complete discussion. The writer has said the things that seemed clear to him from the particular point of view taken throughout the book, without attempting to survey the whole ground of Christian truth. No doubt there is much that others will see, even from the same point of view, that he has not seen. Some readers may perhaps think that there should have been a separate discussion of repentance. The plan of the book, however, requires that this should be treated incidentally and inferentially rather than directly. Some of the subjects that are most easily treated from the standpoint of fellowship—such as prayer and sin—happen to be subjects much canvassed to-day. A whole set of subjects—the Sacraments and Ministry of the Church—is left out. These may, of course, be approached from the side of experience and fellowship. Indeed, this approach carries large consequences for them.[1] But to examine them would have carried the writer far

[1] The writer hopes to deal with this group of subjects in a later volume.

into the realm of Christian controversy, and this book seeks, as far as possible, to avoid that realm.

One word remains. It has been stated that the chief purpose of this book is to show that the phenomena of Christian experience harmonize with the phenomena of experience in general. This does not mean that there is nothing distinctive in the Christian experience. Very far otherwise! To use the terms of science and logic, a *species*, while it is like other *species* in the same *genus*, has yet its own *differentia*. It is unlike the other *species* even while it is like them. It has a distinctive characteristic, and this makes it unique. The chrysanthemum and the daisy belong to the same botanical 'order,' yet they are not therefore just alike. Christian experience is like other experience, yet it is unique. It is the climax of experience. This too, it is hoped, becomes clear below. In concluding this introductory chapter the writer would like warmly to thank his friends Rev. Dr. H. Maldwyn Hughes, Rev. Dr. E. S. Waterhouse, and Rev. F. Bertram Clogg, M.A., for reading the proofs and making a number of valuable suggestions.

PART I

A DESCRIPTION OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

II

THE NORMATIVE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

As soon as it is proposed to describe the Christian experience, someone will say 'Which Christian experience?' Undoubtedly there are many possible answers. For instance, this experience has already been defined as fellowship with Christ, yet some who call themselves Christians assert that they have no such fellowship at all, but that they do seek to follow Christ's example, and that this is what Christianity really is. Probably they would refuse to admit that they have no Christian experience. The controversy involved cannot now be pursued; it must suffice to note that these are not 'Christians' in the sense in which the word is used in this book. This may perhaps be said without discourtesy. Again, while there is a species of person to whom the name 'nominal Christian' is properly applied, no one is here reckoned Christian whom this name completely describes. Other difficulties remain. Psychology to-day speaks of the 'subconscious' alongside the 'conscious.' While psychologists differ in their definition and account of the 'subconscious' and of its relation to the 'conscious,' they agree that there is something rightly called 'subconsciousness.' And they assert of many forms of fellowship—for instance, of the

fellowship of home—that it is in part 'conscious' and in part 'subconscious.' Most Christians who study their own experience would make the same dual assertion of their fellowship with Christ. Again, not a few psychological phenomena occur in children, at least in elementary forms, before the children are themselves aware of it. This is true of some kinds of fellowship. The fellowship of home is again a good instance. Many Christians claim that the Christian experience may begin in children before they are aware of it. Again, many experiences exist in varying degrees. This too is true of some forms of fellowship. How many different degrees are there in the form of fellowship called friendship? Similarly, various Christians 'enjoy' the fellowship of Christ in various degrees. There is a long interval between the vigorous experience of a Paul, with his cry 'Christ in me, the hope of glory,' and the lukewarm feelings of a Laodicean. Which is to be taken as the typical Christian experience? The psychologists help with the answer. They are used to take the 'conscious' experience of men as typical rather than the 'subconscious,' the adult experience rather than the infantile, the vigorous rather than the tepid, the clear rather than the obscure. If these rules be applied to the present subject, the typical Christian experience will be found in such men as Paul and Luther and Wesley. Yet, while it may be studied in all the saints of all the ages, Christians agree that there is one account of it that is normative or 'classical.' This is the experience described in the New Testament. By 'good fortune'—or, in other words, by the providence

of God—the New Testament account is both manifold and single. Paul, and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the author of the Johannine Gospel and Epistles—who will here be called 'John' for convenience—and the other Apostolic writers, differ in their accounts of their fellowship with Christ. Yet, while they differ, they agree. For there is always agreement beneath the differences of several people's experience of the same thing. Here, therefore, while there is sometimes reference to later instances of the Christian experience, and particularly to to-day's, the New Testament account is taken as the 'standard.'[1] And it approves itself so because, when the different 'points of view' of the first and twentieth centuries have been allowed for, the Christian experience of to-day 'verifies' and is in turn 'verified' by that of the New Testament. If at any time such verification should cease, the New Testament would lose its pre-eminent interest as a manual of life, and sink to the level of other ancient documents. Fundamentally it is this verification that 'differentiates' the Bible from other books. As Coleridge said, it 'finds' Christians.

But, again, someone will say, 'Well, but in the last phrases you have passed from the New Testament to the whole Bible. Besides, you have only so far been speaking of a part even of the New Testament. The Apostolic account of the Christian experience does not exhaust that book. What, in particular,

[1] Scripture 'references' are only given when a particular text is in question, not when well-known New Testament doctrines are named. Quotations are usually from the Revised Version, but occasionally from the Authorized.

of the story of Jesus's life, as told in the first three Gospels?' This question leads to another of the postulates of the present treatise. While it is assumed that the typical Christian experience is the experience of the first disciples *after* Pentecost, and not before it—while, in other words, the experience of the 'living Christ' and not of the 'historic Jesus' is taken as normative for Christianity—it is also assumed that the experience of the 'living Christ' was, and is, only possible because once upon a time the 'historic Jesus' lived and worked and taught and died in the land of Israel. In other words, it is assumed that if there had been no 'historic Jesus' there could have been, and there could now be, no clear knowledge of the 'living Christ.' Indeed, if there had been no 'historic Jesus,' the very term 'living Christ' would have no meaning. The Christian experience is rooted in history. Every treatise must explicitly or implicitly make some assumptions, for none can examine every question from the beginning. And while, of course, on this subject there is controversy, a certain solution of the problem involved is here 'postulated.' Some hints of the grounds of the postulate will be found here and there below. From this postulate it follows that, while the experience of those who 'knew Christ after the flesh' began in Galilee, it was there embryonic and incomplete. Without it the complete experience could never have been—yet it was not the complete experience.[1]

Again, while the scope of the present work does not

[1] It is not without significance that many of the intelligent young people of to-day, who seem at first sight to be absorbed in the Jesus of history, all the while assume that He can be and is their daily friend.

require frequent reference to the Old Testament, yet a given opinion about it is implied. This opinion follows from the one just expressed about the Synoptic Gospels. Just as the experience of the living Christ implies the history of Jesus, so the history of Jesus implies the Old Testament. It implies it as an account of the historical antecedents both of the Israel of Jesus' day and of Jesus Himself. But there is more than this. Jesus Himself said that He came to 'fulfil,' or rather to 'complete,' the Old Testament. There is an organic connexion between His teaching, His life, and His death, and the religion whose development is recorded in the Old Testament. The story of Jesus implies Isaiah and Elijah and Moses, as in the world of plants a flower implies leaf and stem and root. 'Salvation is of the Jews.' It is taken for granted here that the Christian experience was and is only possible because, in the history of the Hebrews, there was a certain evolution of religion. Every climax is unique, yet it implies a process. Jesus was far more than a mere product of the Old Testament, yet it was in its soil that the peerless flower grew.

III

FAITH

In the New Testament the Christian experience is described under certain terms which have passed into general Christian use. They portray one experience and its results in life from various points of view. It is convenient to arrange the present account of a Christian's fellowship with Christ under these terms. Some of them are differently defined in different Christian theologies. In such instances no controversial attempt is made to defend the definition adopted. It is enough if each definition is made clear. The first of these terms is 'faith.'

There is no need to point out that there has been controversy about the meaning of 'faith'! Here, however, a beginning may be made from the simplest sense of the word. In that sense it is a synonym for 'trust.' The latter word has the advantage of a corresponding verb 'to trust.' Unhappily English has never 'coined' a verb 'to faith'; we have to be content with the unsatisfactory 'to believe.' But, in this simple sense, it is clear that all human life is 'by faith.' This has been the burden of many a modern sermon. For instance, whenever a man eats food cooked by another, he 'lives' his physical life 'by faith.' Similarly, whenever a man 'pays money'

into a bank, 'draws cheques,' and uses the whole 'credit' system of modern banking, he is living his commercial life 'on trust,' for 'credit' is Latin for 'faith.' Or again, whenever a patient, having listened to a surgeon's explanation, says 'Yes, operate, Doctor,' and yields himself in unconsciousness to the surgeon's skill, he 'trusts' in order that he may live. Only now the trust is on a higher level. Another takes charge, not of a meal or of money, but of physical life itself. In true friendship there is a higher kind of faith still, for in it one person allows and even invites another to take a share in the making or the marring of his mind and character. We shall all bear the marks of every one of our friends for ever. A father who, like the writer, has wistfully watched his little child trot bravely off to school for the first time, will perhaps agree that to trust a 'little one' to others to educate demands a more searching trust still. And, to take the highest instance outside religion, how intimate and wide is the faith of a true home! Or rather, how many are its wide and intimate kinds of trust. To take but one—how almost infinite is the trust between true husband and true wife! These two are one, at the least 'till death do' them part. All human life is by faith. This is only another way of saying that man is societary. It means too that all life is by fellowship, for trust is a 'function' of fellowship.

There are some advantages in beginning with the obvious. For one thing, an obvious instance of a given method makes the method clear. Not a few 'men in the street,' and 'men in the Church' too,

have an inveterate habit of assuming that the terminology of theology is remote from life, and even that religion itself is an isolated section of experience. If this postulate were true, there would be an end of theology and religion, for truth is one, and a study that has no relation to the general 'sum of truth' can only be the study of the imaginary. As has been already stated, the facts of religion are primarily psychological, and one of the purposes of this discussion is to show how some of the phenomena of the Christian religion harmonize with the other phenomena of psychology. The examples of 'faith' just given form a sort of ascending series. A fuller definition may now be given, at least for the highest terms in the series. In such instances of trust as friendship and the home furnish, there is that mysterious unity of persons which is the consummation of fellowship. In them 'faith' may be defined as the act or habit by which one person unites himself with another person.

It is now a common method in definition to draw out the characteristics of a given phenomenon in its more complete forms, and then to seek in the less complete for the same characteristics in embryo. The writer thinks that in some degree there is the uniting of one person with another in all instances of trust, but at least this is so with friendship, marriage, and home. *What* this union of persons exactly is, and *how* it comes to pass, are still mysterious, but *that* it comes to pass, none denies. It is plain too that this union of persons is only another name for fellowship. In the New Testament, and by Christians

generally, it is claimed that there is yet another kind of 'faith,' which surpasses all those already named. They claim that it is the climax of the series, since in it one person 'trusts' himself 'all in all' to another person. They say that a Christian is 'one with Christ' in a way that surpasses even the unity of friend with friend, father with child, wife with husband. They say that the only language adequate to describe it is such a phrase as 'Christ in me,' or 'I in Christ.' And they say this by multitudes. The claim is not to be waived summarily aside as 'superstition.' There is more here than a 'theological nostrum.' To-day many serious thinkers outside the Church allow at least so much. It is admitted that Christian experience is a set of phenomena that demands reasoned explanation. It is here claimed that it harmonizes with other psychological phenomena. The phenomenon called 'faith' is a first instance.[1]

Most readers of Paul agree that by faith he means the self-identification of a Christian with Christ—an identification that still leaves the two separate. This means that the Pauline account of the Christian experience falls in with the account of 'faith' in human life given above. But the writings of Paul do not exhaust the New Testament. Appeal is usually

[1] Perhaps two quotations from 'the heterodox' may be added. They imply, as is shown later (p. 35), that love and faith are two aspects of one passion. Shelley, in his *Defence of Poetry*, writes: 'The great secret of morals is love, or a going out of our own nature and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action or person not our own.' Here it is only the last clause that limps. Mark Rutherford, again, writes in his *John Bunyan*: 'Luther's "imputed righteousness" may be a thing foreign to us; we may be unable to do anything with it, but in so far as it means that we are saved by the righteousness of another man whom we worship, it is true. It must not be mere admiration, but a passionate devotion which grafts Him on us, so that in Him and by Him we live.' (Chapter on 'The Preacher.')

made to-day to three other 'authorities' there,—the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Johannine writings, and the Synoptic Gospels. In discussing New Testament faith the Johannine books easily harmonize with the Pauline. It is true, indeed, that the word 'faith' is infrequent in John, but the verb 'to believe' (or as already suggested 'to faith') is common. Indeed, Godet was not wrong when he suggested that the whole of the Fourth Gospel might be summed under the phrase 'The growth of Faith and Unbelief.'[1] And in the deepest of the deep Johannine passages[2] the *motif* of the whole is just the unity of the believer with the Christ and so with God. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews has a long chapter about 'faith.' It has often been shown that he gives to the term a different connotation from the Pauline. There is no need here, however, to traverse the argument, for the idea that we are seeking is fundamental to the teaching of this Epistle, even though the writer does not sum it under the term 'faith.' There would be no meaning at all in his doctrine of the High-Priesthood of Jesus unless he were able to assume that his readers would take it for granted that the Christian is one with Christ. For the High-Priest of the Old Covenant entered into the Holy of Holies 'not without blood,' altogether as a representative man—as one who in some undescribed way summed up the old Israel in himself. Doubtless he was thought to do this largely because he was 'of the stock of Israel,' but in this respect the new Israel differed from the old.

[1] *Commentary on St. John's Gospel.* (English Translation, vol. i. p. 311.
[2] John xiii.–xvii.

The Christian Church was not one by race, but by what Paul calls 'faith.' And it is only because the writer to the Hebrews takes this unity of Christ and Christians for granted that he is able to conduct his argument at all. What of the Synoptic Gospels? Here too the examination of the use of the term is not the whole of the evidence or even the main part of it. Whether the claim that in these three Gospels the term 'faith' means 'miracle faith' and not 'saving faith' be true or not, it does not go to the root of the matter. The Synoptic Gospels all teach that Jesus gathered around Him a group of 'disciples.' What was the bond that knit them to Him? They 'trusted' Him. It is true that their trust was comparatively shallow and limited at first. Perhaps in its beginning it was no more than the trust that bound other Jews to other Rabbis. But as the fellowship continued, the trust broadened and deepened. More and more the 'disciples' 'yielded themselves' to their great Master. The 'faith' of the Synoptic Gospels is not the Pauline faith, but it is preparatory to it. They are related to each other as the porch to the shrine or the seed to the flower. Whatever process of 'epigenesis' ensued on Pentecost, the faith of the disciple in the Synoptic narrative is the embryo of the faith of the Apostles in the Epistles. This fact illustrates in its own way the claim already made that the faith of Christians harmonizes with the phenomena of faith in general human life.

A particular passage from the Synoptics ought perhaps to be specially named. It has sometimes been said that the parable of the Prodigal Son knows nothing

of 'Salvation by Faith.' Under the definition now given it precisely illustrates it. For, when the Prodigal returns, does he not once more unite himself with the life of his home? Does he not choose once again to be one with his father? And is it not this that makes possible his 'redemption'? And is not the sin of the Elder Brother precisely that he is not really 'one with' his father? Between the two brothers there is just Paul's contrast between 'salvation by faith' and 'salvation by works.' The famous parable does not exhaust Christian truth; it does not illustrate the Atonement—at least not directly; but it is just an example of faith at work.

Is the faith of Christians individual or societary? Can faith be exercised by a society? If faith is both individual and societary, is it primarily the one or the other? Here again the analogies of other human experience are helpful. A common faith—a faith, that is, held in common by a number of individuals—is the cement of all true societies. A nation is a nation by the kind of common faith called patriotism; a political party yields a common faith to some principle or leader or both. Faith is both individual and societary. Herein it is like everything else that is human.[1]

But faith may be mutual as well as common. A band of patriots share a common faith in their country, and this begets a mutual faith in each other. In a home the children's common trust in father and mother grows into a mutual trust in each other. So in Christianity the faith in Christ common to all

[1] See pp. 13 ff.

Christians inevitably issues in a mutual trust. The Church is a society where a common trust in Christ shows itself in the members' mutual trust. Nor is this the whole truth, for, while from one point of view the individual faith seems to precede the mutual faith, from another it depends upon it. Whence does the individual learn of the Christ whom he trusts? Always, directly or indirectly, from the Church. To ask which is primary is like asking whether the right foot or the left is primary when a man walks! Or which of the two *foci* of an ellipse is primary! A patriot's faith in his native land is an individual faith, yet he learns it from the nation of his birth. A child's faith in his parents is individual, yet it winds its web about his heart from the home into which he is born. Man is as individual as he is societary, and as societary as he is individual. This is a uniform phenomenon in life. In religion as elsewhere, individual and societary faith interpenetrate each other.

But a question remains: Can and does the Church, as a unity which is distinct from its members, exercise faith? It is obvious that this is only one instance of a wider question: Can any society, as such, itself exercise faith? And it is clear that the answer to this question depends upon yet another: What is a society? As already seen, psychologists are not agreed about the answer, though some of them believe that societies have 'reality' and that in some sense the common experience of their members is corporate.[1] On this theory it seems to follow that societies can exercise faith. The faith of the Church

[1] pp. 15 f.

in Christ would give an instance. On one side, at least, here too faith as it occurs in Christianity has claims to be the climax of all human faith, for the faith of the Church in the living Christ has no limit at all.

Some important implications of this account of faith may be briefly noticed. It is clear that under the definition given, Christian 'faith' cannot be reduced to an act of the intellect only and made a synonym for creed. It is equally clear that it is not merely emotional, though it has an emotional side. It is clear, once more, that it involves the action of the will. In other words, it is both intellectual, emotional, and volitional—or, as a psychologist would say, it involves the whole 'personality.' Here too it is like the other nobler instances of faith or trust, even while it surpasses them. The faith of an American of the eighteenth century in Washington would serve as an instance.

In the last paragraph it is implied that, when faith is mature, it is the act of the free. Some may object that Christian faith is often 'subconscious,' as in children, or involuntarily derived from the Church, as the frequent phenomenon of some degree of inherited Christianity shows. Here again analogy helps. A child learns the trust of home 'subconsciously,' and he may inherit patriotism, yet neither of them is mature until it is the choice of his own freedom. In other words, the Church shares its 'libertarian' difficulties with other societies. Like them, it still awaits their theoretical solution at the hands of philosophy. Like them too it can and does 'live by

faith ' without such a solution. Yet faith, ' when it is full-grown,' is a function of the free. This means that, if a decision *must* be made between the places of the individual and the societary elements in it, the primacy, though not the priority, falls to the individual element.

Faith is hope. Faith is love. The definition given requires that these three are but different sides of one experience. Many of the sentences above would still be true if either ' hope ' or ' love ' were read for ' faith.' This, again, applies to all the higher examples of the experience of fellowship. In friendship, in home, in patriotism, when these are at their best, there is always a common life, and a common life has common purposes, and the purposes are in constant pursuit, and the pursuit is grounded on the *hope* of attainment, and, in the intensest examples, the hope is ' sure and certain.' It says not only ' we will try to do so and so,' but ' we shall attain,' ' we shall win.' Similarly, and more obviously, faith is love—in friendship, in patriotism, in home, in every one of its high instances. These two are one. There is no need to draw out these identities in the particular instance of Christian faith. The great chapter of ' faith ' in the Epistle to the Hebrews builds on its identity with hope, the Fourth Gospel on its identity with love. Yet ' identity ' is not the best word. These three are different phases or functions of one experience. ' Religion,' wrote Donald Hankey, ' is betting one's life that there is a God.' On analysis this means that religion is faith, hope, love.

It will now begin to appear what the *differentia* or

distinctive quality of Christian faith is. As in some other instances, its distinctiveness lies primarily in its object. The *differentia* of the faith of two homes in the same street is that the trust of the children in the one has a different object from that of the children in the other. The patriotism of an Englishman is distinct from that of a Frenchman in that the object of the one is 'England, my England,' and in the other 'La France.' The Christian faith is unique because its object is Jesus Christ. Two other peculiarities go with this one. As already suggested, the Christian yields Christ an utter faith. All other kinds of faith have their limitations, or at the least the Christian holds that they ought to have. There are things, for instance, which a child should not do at its father's bidding. This is clearest when the child begins to 'grow up.' Similarly, more and more thinkers to-day are coming to see that patriotism can only claim a limited loyalty. They begin to subordinate the love of country to the love of mankind. They say that the error of not a few nations before 1914 was that they put the good of fatherland before the welfare of the world. A Christian would paraphrase this by saying that patriotism is a more limited loyalty than loyalty to the Kingdom of Christ. For him the latter loyalty has no bounds. It is ultimate. He declares that, if once the will of Christ is known, there is no appeal. And he is coming to add that the will of Christ may be learnt, however painfully, about everything that rightly belongs to human life. He yields to Christ, or he holds that he ought to yield to Christ, an utter trust.

The second peculiarity of faith in Christ is that it is rendered to an unseen person. There are, of course, other loyalties to persons, and these are sometimes rendered to persons who are not at the time 'seen,' for they may be distant or dead. But loyalty to a person whom no one ever 'sees' is rare. It is possible indeed that a boy may be encouraged by his father to be 'loyal to his ancestors,'—or, say, to a great-grandfather whom he has never seen. But in reality he is then being summoned to loyalty to a society, or institution, or 'principle.' Some will prefer one term and some another. It is not necessary to discuss which is the best. The loyalties of the religions that have been founded by persons here suggest themselves. Judaism might claim that its sons are loyal to Moses, Islam that its children are loyal to Muhammed, the Buddhist that he is loyal to Gautama, and so on. But it is not meant in any such instance that the devotee is a personal friend of Moses or Muhammed or Gautama. Really, what is meant is loyalty to a society or institution founded by a given historical person. Now, the Christian may be mistaken, but through nineteen centuries he has claimed that his faith in Christ is more than this. He says that Christ, so to say, is his personal friend. His faith, though it may have come to him through a society called the Church, is not accurately described as being fundamentally a loyalty to a society, or trust in a society, but as trust in and loyalty to an unseen person—Jesus Christ. An obvious remark follows: Is there any analogy for a faith that has these two characteristics—a faith which is utter, and which gives itself

to an unseen person? The answer is that there is no such instance of faith given to men, but that this is the kind of faith that men give to God. The faith that Christians yield to Christ is a faith that is only proper to God.

IV

GRACE

In the New Testament ' grace ' is the correlative of ' faith.' As the latter describes the part of the Christian in the fellowship between Christ and himself, so the former describes the part of Christ. ' Grace ' evokes ' faith ' and in turn responds to it. The history of the Greek term rendered ' grace ' may be briefly recalled.

This term (χάρις), like its English equivalent, has in ' secular ' use a variety of meanings. Its root notion seems to have been ' charm.' All things that naturally and properly caused delight had ' grace.' So, in Greek as in English, the word could be used of physical beauty. Or it could be used of behaviour that had charm. Or, to go deeper, in the realm of ' the things that are unseen ' it could be used of spontaneous love, the love that flows unasked and undeserved. At this level perhaps the briefest definition is not the least adequate ; ' grace ' is love at work. When the term was used of the treatment of the mean by the great, it connoted undeserved mercy. This is its meaning in the Old Testament, when used of God. In the New Testament the ' grace ' of God or of Christ is something riper still—undeserved love, especially as shown to the sinful. The *term*

is characteristic of Paul. In this instance, as in others, he found the right word for the Christian phenomenon. It occurs more than eighty times in his Epistles. In the Synoptic Gospels, on the other hand, it is found in the full Christian sense only once, and then doubtfully so.[1] It does not occur in the Fourth Gospel except in the Prologue. But to suppose that, because the *word* is wanting, so is the *thing*, would furnish a peculiarly clear example of what may be called the 'fallacy of terminology.' The modern exact examination of terms—of their history, meaning, and use—is of great value, but it brings its own danger. The histories of a word and of the thing it denotes do not always coincide. The Fourth Evangelist says in his Prologue that the Christ was 'full of grace and truth'—and his book vindicates its Prologue, even though it never again uses the first of these two terms. Similarly, no one can read the Synoptic Gospels without beginning to learn what is meant by 'the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,' even though these books do not use the word in this sense. Here again, it is indeed true that until the experience of Pentecost, the disciples were unable fully to receive the gift that was pouring upon them, but this only means that they, in a way appropriate to their unique experience, 'grew in grace.' As faith denotes the way in which the Christian gives himself to Christ, so 'grace' denotes the way in which Christ gives Himself to the Christian.

The last sentence shows how the 'grace' of Christ brings to a climax and surpasses all other instances

[1] Luke iv. 22.

of 'grace.' His love for the undeserving—or rather for those who deserve that He repulse them—is so intense that He unites Himself with them. This will be drawn out more fully later.[1] Again, Christ's union with men in 'grace' has incalculable results for them, results far above their own compassing, but these, too, are discussed below.[2] Here it falls rather to note that there is a 'mystery' in all fellowship. It is an identity that is a difference. This 'mystery' culminates in the instance under discussion. 'Wheresoever two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I,' 'I am the vine, ye are the branches,' 'Christ in you, the hope of glory,'—these are only a few of the best known illustrations of a fact that pervades the New Testament. This fact is basal to the 'mysticism' of the Christian life in all ages. By the 'grace of our Lord Jesus Christ' we mean that He gives Himself to those who 'receive Him.' Newman's famous hymn speaks of 'a higher gift than grace' and goes on to define this as 'God's presence and His very self.' A better exegesis of the word makes the latter phrase a definition of 'grace.' 'Grace' is the act or habit by which Christ unites Himself with men.

The last sentence recalls the definition of 'faith.' Indeed, the two definitions are all but the same. And this is what one would expect if they are, as is here claimed, primarily accounts of fellowship. Indeed, it is not impossible to transpose the terms There is a very true sense in which Christ, in His acts of 'grace,'

[1] See the chapter on 'The Atonement.' [2] e.g. in chapters vi.–x.

trusts Himself to men,[1] and trust is 'faith.' Again, both the Greek and Latin terms for 'grace' admit 'thanks' as one of their meanings. Real 'thanks' express, not indeed undeserved love, yet spontaneous love. A merely dutiful recognition of obligation is not true thankfulness. In this there is love, and so in this there is 'grace.' While usually and properly the term 'faith' describes the Christian's share in the Christian experience, and 'grace' the share of Christ, yet both are 'functions' of the one fellowship, if one may use so tasteless a word for so beautiful a thing. In every kind of fellowship persons give themselves to each other, but in this one with a unique abandon.

Does Christ in 'grace' unite Himself with the individual Christian or with the Christian society? The answer, here as always, is that the two involve each other. For the sake of simplicity, the discussion above has spoken of 'grace' as though in it Christ unites Himself with individuals, but this is only half of the truth. It is possible to quote great passages from the New Testament which contemplate the union of Christ with the Church—for instance, the passage in John about 'the vine' and the passages in Paul about 'the body.' The doctrine of 'grace,' like that of 'faith,' treats man as being at once individual and societary. It is true that Christ yields Himself to men one by one—yet it is also true that the society to which they belong conditions the gift. Those who claim that Christ gives Himself to sincere seekers, even among 'the heathen,' who do not know it, would yet

[1] Cf. John ii. 24.

admit that there is a difference between this act of His ' grace ' and that by which He enters into fellowship with a man in a Christian land. And it is the difference in the societies to which the two men belong that conditions the difference in the experience. Or again, what do Christians mean by claiming that they are ' one in Him ' ? The attempt to decide whether the individual or the societary is primary in any department of human life, is like attempting to decide which side of an arch supports the other. Both elements are essential and inevitable.

It was said above of faith that a common relation of men to Christ involves their mutual relation to each other. It is almost mere repetition to add now that the common relation of Christ to men in ' grace ' issues in a mutual relation of those men to each other. The analogy of home is once again the most suggestive. The mutual ministries of brotherhood and sisterhood ensue upon the common relation of childhood. So the mutual ministry of Christians to each other ensues upon their common experience of the grace of Christ. The New Testament has a distinctive word here, a word derived from its term for ' grace.' English has no term that exactly corresponds, and it would be well if it were to transliterate and assimilate the Greek word in question, and speak of ' charismata.' The translation ' gifts '—as used, for instance, in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians—is quite inadequate. What is meant is a gift that has come to a given Christian by the ' grace ' of Christ, that takes character from the Christian's own personality, and

that passes on from him in service to his fellow-Christians. ' Charismata ' are all alike, yet all different, for they all come from Christ, yet they belong to various persons. The very term denotes a mutual relation among Christians that bases upon a common relation to Christ. Every Christian is perfected in Christ Jesus, yet no Christian can be perfected alone. Grace, like faith, is ' interpenetratively ' individual and societary.

Two other remarks may here again be added. The relation of the society called the Church to Christ displays all the characteristics that belong to the relation of other great societies, and particularly other great religious societies, to their founders. Christ is to the Church all that Gautama is to Buddhism or Muhammed to Islam. But He is also more. Or at least, the Christian has always claimed that He is more. While on some sides the relation of Christ to Christians has analogies with the relations of human leaders to other societies, on other sides the only analogy that serves is the relation of God to men. Christians claim that an unseen, living, and personal Christ holds fellowship with them. No such claim has been made for the founders of secular societies. The long ' influence ' of Washington, for instance, in the political society called the United States, is other than this. No such claim has been made for the founders of religions other than Christianity, except where—as in some examples, for instance, of neo-Buddhism—the idea has been borrowed from Christianity. Even those who dispute this statement will agree that, where such a relation between other founders of religions and their devotees seems to

exist, the human founders have come to be treated as gods. The Christian doctrine of grace, like that of faith, harmonizes with the general psychological phenomena of fellowship, but it has still its *differentia*, and for its *differentia* the only parallel is to be found in the fellowship of men with God.

V

THE DEATH OF CHRIST

It will have been noticed that the discussion both of what is meant by 'faith' and of what is meant by 'grace' has led up to the idea of fellowship with God. Another name for this fellowship is worship. The notion that man may hold fellowship with God is of course much older than Christianity—as old indeed as religion—that is, as old as man. And along with this notion there has always gone another—that there is something that hinders and breaks this fellowship. This something is called sin. It is true that both the ideas of what God is, of what fellowship with Him means, and of what sin is, have varied from age to age. The three concepts naturally vary together. Where the concept of God has grown spiritual and ethical, there the concepts of worship and sin have grown spiritual and ethical too. In spite of change in connotation, the three ideas have stood in a constant relation to each other. Again, it is true that sin has more often been defined as the contradiction of the will of God than as the breach of fellowship with Him. But any psychologist will declare that these two are one. Any contradiction of will tends to a breach of fellowship; any chill in fellowship shows itself in an incipient contradiction of will. Once more, the term 'sin' has often been used both of separate acts and of the general state

of one who commits such acts. Yet these two go together, as the motions of the two oars of a boat. Both fall readily under the idea that sin is anything that mars or breaks man's fellowship with God.

Something will be said at a later stage about the problems that arise under the doctrine of 'sin,'[1] but the experience of sin does not depend upon the stating or solving of such problems. One might as well claim that the experience of 'falling in love' depends upon the solution of the problems that cluster round the question, 'What is love?' Sin is an experience, problems or no problems. Men do know that they are alienated from God by refusing to do His will. Again, whatever the explanation, sin is a universal phenomenon. An atheist may deny the existence of sin. Indeed he must deny it under the definition given above, for the definition presupposes the existence of God. Yet usually the atheist rather changes the definition of sin than denies its existence. He will call it, for instance, an 'anti-social act,' and go on to assert its universality. Among those who believe in God there is agreement that sin is committed 'against God' and that it is universal. 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned'; 'All have sinned and come short.'

Here the idea of repentance intrudes. It is implied both above and below. If all have sinned, and if Christ is sinless, it follows that before anyone can even desire His fellowship, he must repent. Or rather, repentance and the desire for the fellowship of God are two sides of one experience. Repentance and faith naturally go together. And in repentance, as in

[1] pp. 209 ff.

faith, the whole personality is engaged. In repentance there is a cognitive element,—the sinner recognizes that he has sinned; there is an emotional element,—he is sorry for his sin; there is a volitional element,—he wants to forsake it. If any of the three elements is lacking, there is no true repentance. Indeed, the more deeply religious men are—that is, the more they live according to their belief that there is a God—the more conscious they are of sin. He who practises a fellowship most is most keenly aware of anything that tends to interrupt and thwart it. No one, therefore, who takes serious account of the typically religious life, whether in the Christian form or in any other, can omit to take serious account of the phenomenon of sin. A student of medicine would as easily omit to take account of the phenomenon of disease.

Just because Christianity is the climax of religion, it gives the deepest and truest account of man's fellowship with God, and in consequence it gives the deepest and truest account of sin and its issues. The two statements are only the positive and negative accounts of the same fact. Yet the distinctive contribution of Christianity to the subject of sin is not this. In a sense, Christianity takes sin for granted. Its claim is that through Jesus Christ men can and do escape from sin—and this whether sin be considered as an act or a state. A single New Testament instance[1] will suffice to illustrate the claim. Saul of Tarsus, before his 'conversion,' was a typically 'respectable man'; yet he was also an earnest man of religion; his religious experience, therefore, issued in the cry, 'O wretched

[1] Rom. vii. and viii.

man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? ' There came a moment when he ' believed in Christ.' From that moment he knew that he had escaped from the slavery of sin. He expresses the fact in the sequel of the passage just quoted : ' God sending His own Son . . . hath emancipated me from the law of sin and death.' The Christian claims that through fellowship with Christ he escapes—it may be quickly or it may be slowly—from sin. He claims this both for the past and future. For the past there is forgiveness, for the future there is power. He claims that if he fail either of forgiveness or power, it is because he falters in his fellowship with Christ. His distinctive tenet about sin is that ' in Christ ' he escapes it—and so may find full fellowship with God.

Yet this is not all. Both in the New Testament account of the Christian experience, and in every revival of ' evangelical experience ' since, the Christian has claimed that he escapes sin through the *death* of Christ. It is indeed true that before the Crucifixion the truth that ' the Son of Man must suffer ' was a mere puzzle to the disciples. This was natural so long as their experience of Christ did not include the Cross. It is true, again, that in the period immediately after Pentecost they testified rather to an amazing experience than to one that they understood, and that in their first glance at it the Resurrection seemed more wonderful than the Crucifixion—but this was natural too. It is true, thirdly, that the New Testament contains no integrated account of what the Atonement is—of the way in which the death of Christ frees men from sin. The omission of explanation, however,

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does not invalidate the fact that this was the experience of the first Christians. To use again a parallel that has already been used, the fact that even to-day there is no adequate explanation of the deep and valuable experience called 'falling in love' does not mean that for millenniums the experience has not been frequent. It is easy to illustrate the confident connexion in New Testament experience of 'redemption from sin' with the death of Christ. The first believers laid hold at once of the most apposite passage in the Old Testament. Already in the days that followed Pentecost the name 'Thy holy Servant' was appropriated to Jesus, and could be used of Him without explanation.[1] The Christian heart, that is, sped quickly to the fifty-third of Isaiah. Or again, the whole Epistle to the Hebrews would be meaningless without the belief that the Christian had a High-Priest who had Himself died to put away sin. Again, even 'the apostle of love' flings the name 'antichrist' at those who in his day began to deny that the Son of God could really die.[2] Once more, the Apocalypse is a symbolic account of mankind's long travail to be sinless. From the first it is dominated by One who cries 'I was dead, and I am alive for evermore.'[3] As for Paul, the 'time would fail' to show in how many ways he asserts or implies the same truth. If it were not true that 'while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,'[4] Paul would have no gospel at all.

A single instance must serve to illustrate how the

[1] Acts iii. 13; v. 20. 'The analysis of the connexion between the sin of men and the death of Christ was, of course, the work of Paul, but the connexion itself was recognized from the beginning.' (Anderson Scott, *The Fellowship of the Spirit*, p. 63.)

[2] 1 John iv. 1–3. [3] Rev. i. 18. [4] Rom. v. 8.

same connexion has held in the typical Christian experience of later times.[1] The late W. T. Stead once conducted a census of 'favourite hymns.' Going about it like the thorough journalist he was, he sought diligently for 'votes' from all sorts of people. Some results of the census were surprising, but one surprised no one. A certain hymn came easily first when the 'votes' were counted: 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me.' Why? It is easy to criticize its poetry; easy to point out the 'mixing' of its metaphors; easy to show that it thrusts New Testament ideas upon an Old Testament passage; easy to prove that it conveys no adequate theory of the Atonement. Yet, written by a Calvinist as an attack upon the Arminians, it has continuously captured and united both. It has been the favourite of multitudes of 'unlearned and ignorant' Christians, and of Gladstone. Why? Because it expresses the 'mystic' fact that the Christian knows that because Christ died, he himself escapes from sin unto God. Or to recur to the phraseology suited to the present subject, he knows that by the death of Christ the breach in his fellowship with God that sin has made is healed. Through it a believer is 'one with God.'

It is a mistake, however, to think that the New Testament does no more than assert a great fact about the death of Christ, *sans* explanation, just as

[1] Perhaps a quotation from a very different source may be added:

Jesus said, 'Wouldst thou love one who had never died
For thee, or ever die for one who had not died for thee?
And if God dieth not for man, and giveth not Himself
Eternally for man, man could not exist, for man is love,
As God is love. Every kindness to another is a little Death
In the Divine Image, nor can man exist but by brotherhood.'
—WILLIAM BLAKE.

it is a mistake to claim that it provides a full explanation. The first Christians were like other intelligent men in desiring to understand their experience. The New Testament does contain the first suggestions of explanation. These suggestions point in the right direction. The fact that they do not form anything like a complete explanation will not astonish anyone who reads history. For instance, how slowly are the churches that sprang from the 'evangelical revival' of the eighteenth century feeling their way to a philosophy of the experience that they then 'revived.' The New Testament writers do say something more about the death of Christ than that 'somehow' the Christian escapes from sin through it. What they say is largely metaphorical. They use several metaphors, yet no metaphor is very frequent. And like all other metaphors, these may be 'carried too far,' for a metaphor makes a comparison between two things, not because they are *altogether* alike, but because *in some ways* they are alike. Indeed a metaphor may legitimately be used if two things are only alike in one clear way. Not a few of the historical errors about the 'theory of the Atonement' have sprung from the applying of the comparisons implied in the New Testament metaphors farther than the New Testament applies them—and farther than they do actually apply. Perhaps the four most famous of these metaphors are those summed under the terms 'ransom,' 'sacrifice,' 'propitiation,' 'reconciliation.' The first uses a metaphor from slavery.[1] A slave

[1] Some think that the metaphor is taken from the 'loosing' of a captive. If so, the comments made above still stand, 'captive' being read for 'slave,' and 'captivity' for 'slavery.'

might be 'ransomed' or 'redeemed'—bought out of slavery. It is certain that the state of sin is a slavery, and that through the death of Christ men escape it. So far the metaphor is entirely appropriate. But when some Christian teachers in the so-called 'Dark Ages' went on to say that because in the 'redemption' of a slave there were three parties—the one who redeemed, the man redeemed, and the man to whom the 'redeemer' paid the price—there must also be three parties in the 'redemption' that Christ made on the Cross—the 'redeemer' who paid the price, the 'believer' for whom the price was paid, and the devil, to whom the price was paid—they were applying the metaphor on a side where it was inappropriate. Similarly, some Christians of later days have wrongly insisted that the idea of 'bargain'—of the giving and receiving a price, as in a commercial transaction—which was undoubtedly an element in the 'redemption' of a slave, must belong to the doctrine of the Atonement. Again, there is no doubt that the comparison of Christ's death with a 'sacrifice' is appropriate indeed; the writer to the Hebrews shows abundantly how appropriate. But he refuses to be led captive by his metaphor. He selects from the Levitical ritual a few details in which he claims that Christ's death was like the old sacrifices, and he leaves a whole multitude of other details in the seclusion of the Old Testament.[1] Nor, when occasion arises, does he hesitate to 'mix' his metaphors. He declares that Christ is like both 'priest' and 'sacrifice' at once. While

[1] The most 'orthodox' preachers do the same. For instance, has any of them ever applied *all* the details of the ritual of the so-called 'scapegoat' to Christ?

our Lord cannot be in all ways like both, He can be and is like each in some ways. These ways centre in the idea of the renewal of fellowship between God and man. With the term ' propitiation ' another difficulty emerges. It uses a metaphor which, like the two already named, is uncommon in the New Testament, but it does occur. And it refers to the same Old Testament ritual. But it is often supposed that when its original and etymological meaning has been elucidated, its meaning both in the Old Testament and the New has been fixed. This is not so. The word has a long history. At first it had reference to the idea that by a timely gift a ' sinner ' might ' buy off ' the anger of a god. But long before the close of the Old Testament period Israel had outgrown this notion, and, as it outgrew it, the meaning of some of its religious terms changed. Such changes in the meaning of terms are of course quite common. An Englishman of to-day, for instance, does not give the same meaning to the phrases ' the Lord Chancellor ' and ' the rector of the parish,' as his forefathers gave centuries ago. The one does not keep the king's door nor the other rule. By the time of the ' Second Temple ' the idea that gave colour to the word ' propitiation ' was no longer the mollifying of irascibility but the annulling of separation.[1] The ' Israelite indeed ' of those days knew that sin separated him from God and longed that this alienation should be put away. No one can read sympathetically the account of the

[1] This does not *imply* that God is not angry with the sinful, but that His anger is that of a sorrowful and righteous father, not of a vindictive despot.

ritual of ' the great Day of Atonement ' without feeling this. The symbolic word ' propitiation ' symbolized now not so much the allaying of irritation as the removal of hindrances to intercourse.[1] It is not the same as our fourth term ' reconciliation,' but leads easily to it. This is the least metaphorical of the four terms, and so perhaps the most nearly adequate. It denotes the renewal of a broken fellowship. So it leads straight to the present subject. The Christian claims that for him the death of Christ restores this fellowship with God and so ' puts away ' sin. Once more, therefore, the discussion of one of the distinctive Christian tenets leads up to the idea of fellowship.

Yet the New Testament goes one step further in its attempt to explain ' the Atonement.' As has often been noted, it says man needs to be reconciled to God, not that God needs to be reconciled to man. How is man thus ' reconciled ' ? Here the fellowship *of Christ* with the Christian returns upon the discussion. It has been said that by ' faith ' the Christian makes himself one with Christ, and that in ' grace ' Christ makes Himself one with the Christian. It is the latter side of this fellowship that is here the more prominent. The New Testament Christian felt that in some way Christ was more completely one with him on the Cross than He was even in the Incarnation. To anticipate in part what will be said more fully later, the ' believer ' felt that,

[1] In several places where the term ἱλασμός is used in the LXX, there is little to decide which meaning is the more appropriate, and appeal has to be made to the general temper of Hebrew religion at the time. Still, there are clear instances, as in Ps. cxxx. (where the LXX uses ἱλασμός in verse 4 for the word translated ' forgiveness '), and Dan: ix. 9. For a full discussion see S. R. Driver in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, article ' Propitiation.'

while Christ was one with man through the Incarnation, He was one with *sinful* man in the Crucifixion. Some may claim that this is to require that on the Cross Christ was Himself sinful. The first Christians refused to admit that this was so, yet they stood by the assertion that on the Cross Christ 'bore the sins' of sinful man. John has the saying: 'The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world'; the writer to the Hebrews builds his epistle upon the truth that the sinless Jesus in His death 'put away' sin: Paul embodies the same idea in a very bold paradox: 'Him who knew no sin, [God] made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.'[1] The fellowship of Christ with the men that He came to save was consummated on the Cross. Because He entered fully there into fellowship with sin-stricken men, they can enter fully into fellowship with Him. They thereby escape sin and enter once more into fellowship with God. The Cross is the climax both of grace and faith. So much the New Testament writers say in the terminology of their own time.

It follows that there is a 'vicarious' element in the Cross. It is now generally allowed that the Bible does not teach 'vicarious punishment,' but that it does know of 'vicarious suffering.' The preposition 'instead of' (ἀντί) occurs once or twice only about the death of Christ; the preposition 'on behalf of' (ὑπερ) occurs many times. It follows that the former ought to be interpreted by the latter, and not *vice versa*. But the preposition rendered

[1] John i. 29 Heb. iv. 15; 2 Cor. v. 21.

'on our behalf,' as it occurs for instance in the last passage quoted from Paul, itself denotes something 'vicarious.' For that ugly word, when examined, in itself asserts no more than this,—that there are things that men can do for each other. It will at once be allowed that this is true of 'outward things'—that, for instance, a father may make a fortune for a whole family. But it is also true of some 'inward things.' One man is an Englishman because he is born of a certain race, another man is a Russian because he is born of another race. Other men have done a great many 'inward things' for both that this may be so. Other illustrations—from the school, for instance, or the home—at once throng. If it be allowed that men are societary in any real sense, it follows that there is a 'vicarious element' in their common life. Indeed, the two assertions mean just the same thing. The word 'fellowship' carries the same connotation. It is true that men are 'individual' as well as 'societary,' and that therefore, while there are some things that men may do for each other, there are others that they can only do for themselves. In the forgiveness of sins the New Testament requires both elements. That a man 'believe in Christ' is for it an individual act. For Christ to 'die for' men, is, again, an act of His own choosing. But through these acts the 'believer' and Christ enter into so close a fellowship that there are societary results, if the phrase may be allowed. It has already been seen that the nature of the societary in man is still a mystery. It does not cease to be a mystery in this instance. Yet this instance is a true instance. There is a vicarious element in the Cross.

It does exemplify 'the solidarity of mankind.' Let those who deny this go on to deny that there is any truth in Kipling's famous lines:

> Were I drowned in the deepest sea,
> Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!
> I know whose tears would come down to me,
> Mother o' mine, O mother o' mine!

There is as yet no explanation of the 'vicarious,' but it permeates life. Why should it be excluded from the Cross? Why should it not culminate there?

It will now perhaps be clear why the New Testament never isolates the death of Christ. It is unique, yet it is not unrelated to other things. It is the completion of a process, the process by which Jesus, Himself sinless, became one with men, even though they were sinful. It is not to be separated from the life of Jesus. Again, it is the beginning of another process—the process by which sinful men escape from sin. In other words, it is not to be separated from the Resurrection. For in the New Testament the Resurrection is triumph over sin. For its thinkers the Crucifixion without the Resurrection would have been failure. Further, for them the Resurrection was not an isolated event but the beginning of a new 'Life of Christ.' The fellowship of Christ and Christians did not end on Calvary. 'Him who knew no sin [God] made to be sin on our behalf *that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*' The Christian experience is that of fellowship with the Christ who 'was dead and [is] alive.' One word more—this experience includes forgiveness of sin, and the forgiveness is the forgiveness *of God.*[1]

[1] This is more fully developed on pp. 144 f.

VI

JUSTIFICATION AND REGENERATION

THE mention of ' forgiveness ' easily leads to a discussion of ' justification,' for, as Wesley said in his famous sermon on ' justification by faith,' ' The plain, scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins.'[1] Yet it is forgiveness looked at in a particular way. Literally ' to justify ' means ' to treat a man as if he were righteous.' It does not in itself assert either that he is righteous, or that he is unrighteous. When used in theology, it means ' to treat a sinner as if he were righteous.' Perhaps the nearest current English word is ' to acquit.' The term, therefore, is a ' forensic ' or legal one. With many to-day this is enough. The ' forensic ' revolts them. At best it seems artificial to introduce the terminology of legal procedure into a discussion of the relation of Christ and Christians. Yet it was Paul who first fastened on this word to describe one element in his own experience of Christ, and the same word has in turn been a favourite with Luther and with Wesley. These three masters of the evangelical faith all had a palpitating experience of Christ. Why did they all love this ' forensic ' word ?

Luther and Wesley loved it in turn because in turn

[1] Sermon on ' Justification by Faith,' para. 5.

they rediscovered the thing that Paul meant by it. And the reason why Paul chose a ' forensic ' term may be discerned if the influence of environment be recalled. Why have the writers of the last fifty years fallen so readily into the terminology of biology? Why have they all ' naturally ' spoken in terms of ' heredity ' and ' evolution '? Why have many done so without being fully conscious of it? Because, from the time of Darwin, the interest of most thinking people has been focused on the world of living things. The mental ' atmosphere ' has been biological. A reader of the Thirtieth Century may quite easily find this phraseology ' artificial,' for there is no reason why the mental environment of to-day should be perpetual. Indeed, it is already changing, or at least enlarging. For the biological is giving room to the psychological, and to-day anyone and everyone talks of ' personality ' and ' thought-forms ' and ' the subconscious.' What was the mental environment of Paul? He was at once a Jew and a Roman. Incredible as it may seem at first sight, both these peoples employed ' thought-forms ' of law as naturally as men of to-day employ ' thought-forms ' of biology and psychology. The religion of Israel had for centuries been a religion of law. This is what the emergence of Pharisaism means. In another way, Roman thought was legal. Indeed, the one original contribution of Rome in the domain of thought was just on this side. The Roman mind has had no match in the sense of order, and order is law. This is obvious, whether the Roman Empire be considered, or a Latin sentence, or an old mosaic, or a Roman road, or the Institutes of Justinian. The wonder

of the world in Paul's day was the Roman Empire, and it was a triumph of law. So, alike as Jew and Roman, Paul found it easy to use a legal term to describe a certain aspect of his Christian experience. What was this? Can it be put in terms of fellowship?

Paul knew that through his fellowship with Christ, he was in a new *relation to* God, and it was this that he sought to express by a familiar legal term. Now, it is clear that, whenever anyone first enters into fellowship with another, the two do stand in a new relation to each other, and that 'relation' denotes here something neither unreal, artificial, nor unimportant. A young fellow may not love a girl one whit more at 2.0 *p.m.* than at noon, yet if at 1.0 *p.m.* she promised to be his wife, he does not talk about 'a mere change of relation.'[1] In the realm of fellowship 'relation' may carry everything.

Further, in the Christian fellowship with Christ a particular kind of fellowship is involved—that of an 'inferior' with a 'superior,' of a weaker with a stronger, of an imperfect man with the perfect Man. In such instances, the new relation that fellowship introduces is of a distinctive type. When a child is born into the fellowship of home, he is very imperfectly a 'person.' Where are the marks of personality—where, for instance, the use of the concept and term 'I'? But in a certain embryonic way the child has begun to be a person, and he is reckoned as such. If a census happens to be taken the day after he is born, he is counted as one more person. It is true that he is not

[1] It may be noted perhaps too that, at such gatherings as those of the Student Christian Movement, the young people of to-day quite naturally say such things as 'I want to be in the right relation to God.'

yet fully a person, and that his deficiencies from this point of view impose restrictions upon the endeavour to treat him as one, yet the endeavour is never interrupted. What will his mother say to anyone who for a moment treats him as a thing? He is given a status to which he is unequal, and, if anyone cared to call this status 'artificial,' it would be hard altogether to rebut the word. Similarly, a 'new boy' at a great school is 'one of ours' the day after his entry. He does not yet know the ways of the fellowship into which he has been admitted; his schoolfellows will perhaps initiate him into them in strange fashion; but let any outsider interfere with him, and at once the whole school rallies to him. A new fellowship entails a new relation, and, where the new member of a society is in any way unequal to its fellowship, the relation is one that he cannot yet 'live up to.' It would be quite easy to illustrate the same phenomenon in the instances of a newly-initiated Freemason, or a recently 'naturalized' citizen, or a newly 'adopted' child. So far as is possible, they are all treated as being something which as yet they are not. And, if later they become all that the fellowship requires, it is in part the result of just this kind of treatment. A child grows up to be worthy of his home if he is from the first treated as one of its members; an expert schoolmaster carefully nurtures in his school the 'public spirit' that gives the 'new boy' to understand from his first day that he is 'one of us'; the 'parents' who adopt a daughter must treat her 'right off' as if she were one by birth or they will not lead her to love them as a 'daughter born' would; and so on. It will

be noticed that this last example uses another of Paul's 'forensic' words, 'adoption.' When he speaks of this or of 'justification by faith,' he is using the 'thought-forms' of the First Century to say that when he entered into fellowship with Christ 'by faith,' he found himself in a new relation to God, that he was treated as a forgiven man—more, that he was treated as if he were a good man. How else could fellowship lead him fully to be a good man? Was not the Prodigal, the moment he reached home, treated once again as fully a member of it, even though the smell of the swine still hung about his hands and the filth of the far country was not yet wholly gone from his mind? This is 'justification.' The Parable of the Prodigal has not the word, but it has the thing.

'But,' it will be objected, 'in the instances given the word "pretence" would not be in place. After all, though the child is not fully a person, he has begun to be one; though the new boy has not fully "drunk of the spirit" of the school, he has begun to do so; though the "naturalized citizen" has not yet fully gained the temper of his "adopted" country, he wants to do so, and even this means that in an elementary way the process has begun. In each instance the new member of the society is treated as being more than he is, because, through fellowship with it, the process by which he is to reach that goal has already commenced.' The same is true of the Pauline 'justification by faith.' The man who has really entered into the fellowship with Christ that faith implies, has already begun to be a good man. This is why he is treated as one. The process is incipient, or

embryonic, but it is real. The man who has 'faith' in Christ has already begun to be like Him, to 'drink of His spirit,' to live a life like His. Christian theology has usually described this fact by the word 'regeneration.' Here Wesley may again be quoted. He said that, while 'justification' and 'regeneration' are distinguishable in thought, and while the former may in logic be said to precede the latter, yet 'in order of time neither of these is before the other.'[1] The two terms are not ubiquitous in the New Testament,[2] but the experience that they denote is. The Christian who 'believed in the Lord Jesus Christ' was conscious that he was in a new and happy relation to God, and that he had begun to be a 'child of God.' Neither part of the experience was of his own desert, but both were there.

It will be noticed that here again it is implied that a given relation to Christ 'carries' a new relation to God. The implication is discussed later. At this point it is rather the further meaning of the idea summed up under the word 'regeneration' that needs to be examined.

It is another of the constant phenomena of fellowship that it issues in change of character. This, again, is most obvious in the instances of close and continuous fellowship. Two close friends leave each a mark on the other's character which endures for ever. It is *indelibilis*. This is even clearer of the fellowship that exists between husband and wife, or mother and child. It is therefore to be expected that the fellowship of Christ with a Christian will mean change in

[1] Sermon on 'The New Birth,' para. 1.

[2] 'Justify' and 'Justification' do not occur in John or Hebrews; the metaphor of re-birth is sporadic and rare, except in John.

character. But is the change on both sides or only on one? And how great is the change?

Different answers might be given to the question whether the fellowship of the Son of God with men on earth made any difference in His character. Older thinkers said unhesitatingly that it made no difference; the thought of to-day is not so sure. In the New Testament the Epistle to the Hebrews lends help to the more modern point of view. Its writer declares, for instance, that Jesus 'learnt obedience by the things which He suffered.' This question, however, is not one that a Christian can answer directly by examining his own experience. Again, two questions need to be distinguished—first, when Jesus entered into fellowship with mankind in the Incarnation and Crucifixion, did this mean any change in His character? Second, does the fellowship of the Risen Christ with Christians affect at all the character of Christ? Some who would say 'Yes' to the first would say 'No' to the second. Neither, however, is so important for the practice of the Christian life as the correlative question: Does fellowship with Christ alter the character of Christians, and if so, how much?

Here two particular features of this fellowship are again important—that it is between a stronger and a weaker, a nobler and a meaner 'personality'; and that it is a fellowship that covers the whole of life. The change produced in character by such an intermittent and restricted fellowship as that of a Musical Society may be slight; the difference made to Helen Keller by the continuous and wide fellowship that her friend held with her was enormous. Or, to take an instance

from fiction, no doubt Silas Marner, in the days before Eppie was left by his fireside, often saw little children at play and may even have laughed a moment with them on his less surly days, yet this degree of fellowship made no distinguishable difference in his character; but, when a little child's fellowship became 'part and parcel' of his daily life, he began to be 'another man.'

Again, the difference made in character will be greater in proportion as those who share it have lived *different* lives. One of the most popular of Joseph Conrad's novels, *Almayer's Folly*, is a study in fellowship. It tells of the marriage of a European man with a Malay woman. All the while each is striving not to become like the other, and therefore whatever initial fellowship they had soon dwindles and dies. But it is plain that, if there is to be true fellowship in such an instance, there must be a far greater change of character on one side or both than when two Europeans marry or two Malays. Again, a clergyman's life in an English village may greatly 'influence' the character of many of the villagers, but it can hardly make so great a change in them as the 'influence' of the first missionaries to Fiji had upon the lives of cannibals. For there have been clergymen in the village for a millennium, not to name other 'Christian influences,' and so in the village life there have long been many Christian traits, however 'subconsciously' acquired. On the other hand, the life of the English village may be as different as the Fijian from what it would have been 'if there had been no Christ.'

The last example has been taken from Christian phenomena because there is no other instance of

change of character so far-reaching as that which fellowship with Christ works in individuals and societies. It is not only that His 'personality' surpasses all others in strength and wisdom and love, though, even on this ground fellowship with Him would 'mean more' to a man than fellowship with any other. But there is something else. So far the phenomena noted have been of differences rather than contradictions. Between Jesus' character and that of other men there is a contradiction: He is sinless and they are sinful. The religious mind always recognizes here a 'great gulf.' Sin may seem a slight thing to those who 'have no use for God,' but to those who long for His fellowship it is the greatest thing in the world but one. For God 'cannot away with it.' It may be a small thing to many men that a certain lady 'cannot away with' them, but what is it to her would-be lover that she 'cannot away with him'? The analogy of course fails in that it does not take account of the truth that all men really need the fellowship of God, but it illustrates the present point. Fellowship with Christ means that, gradually or suddenly, the Christian's character suffers the change from sin to sinlessness. This is to put the truth negatively. Positively it means the abandonment of the positive habit called 'sin' and the adoption of the positive habit called 'righteousness.' The fact that the change is often gradual does not really affect its degree. Light and darkness are opposites whether dawn comes quickly, as in the tropics, or slowly, as at the Poles. For so far-reaching a change one metaphor is peculiarly appropriate. It is often used indeed for the lesser

changes that ensue on other fellowships. The change that has come to a man through a great friendship has often been called 'the beginning of a new life.' True wedlock always begins 'a new life.' In the Jewish Apocalyptic literature 'the saved are described as *viventes*,' or 'the living.' A recent study of the New Testament history has shown unanswerably that 'life' is the term that best describes the experience that began at Pentecost.[1] A Polish teacher of psychology, converted yesterday, bears the same witness.[2] Christianity is a 'new life.' Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom of God everywhere requires this. The sinless man could not but say to all other men, 'Ye must be born again.'[4] Whether He actually spoke the words or not, they epitomize His message. To take another Biblical instance, the famous contrast between the Seventh and Eighth Chapters of Romans can be put into two words: in the former chapter Paul is crying 'I die! I die!'; in the latter, 'I live! I live!' When fellowship begins between those whose characters are not only different but contrary, the degree of consequent change in the character of the weaker of the two reaches its climax. Such a change may be called indifferently a 'revolution,' a 'conversion,' or a 'new birth.'

In the instances just given—of Pentecost, of the Polish psychologist, of St. Paul—the change in

[1] Anderson Scott, *The Fellowship of the Spirit*, p. 48.
[2] *Op. cit.*, chap. iii. [3] *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1923, pp. 697 ff.
[4] A parallel Synoptic saying was spoken not to a Pharisee but to disciples—and the disciples were the best people Jesus could find in the best race in the world: 'Except ye turn and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' Even they must start life again. There is the same implication in the Synoptic call to 'repentance' (μετάνοι , change of mind), a word which does not chance to occur in John.

character began at a clearly marked point of time. This is not always so. Does the difference mean that the term ' new birth ' or ' regeneration ' is inappropriate? The instance of the English and Fijian villages has already suggested the answer. If a child is born in Fiji to-day, if he learns of Jesus ' at his mother's knee,' if he begins to love Him, as he begins to love his mother, without knowing that he is so doing, if he continues so to love, if, in short, like many an English child, he begins to forsake sin as soon as he knows how to commit it, because he is already entering into the fellowship of Christ, is his ' life in Christ ' therefore the less different from a sinful life than it would have been if, like his forefathers, he had begun by worshipping some fierce ' fetish ' and eating his fellow-men? Surely not. Some men find a new friend at thirty and the new friendship ' changes their lives.' Others enjoy a friendship ' from childhood's days '; the difference that the friendship makes in their lives is not likely therefore to be less but greater. ' Justification ' and ' regeneration ' describe two truths about the Christian's fellowship with Christ, and the truths are there, however and whenever the fellowship begins. To insist that because physical birth occurs at a definite moment, so must spiritual ' birth,' is to misapply a metaphor,[1] yet the metaphor may still be rightly applied. Fellowship with Christ means for sinful men a new life.

[1] When any one stresses the metaphor to mean that every Christian must be *conscious* of the moment when he is ' born again ' and must be able to *recall* it, one asks ' Is, then, an infant conscious of birth, and in later years can he recall the moment? '

VII

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST

THERE was a popular psychology long before there was a scientific one. One of its terms was ' spirit.' What did it mean by the term? An illustration or two will show. It is said that, when some of Carlyle's later tracts appeared anonymously in a periodical magazine, a reviewer of insight wrote, ' These papers are either by Mr. Carlyle or his first serious imitator.' The reviewer did not mean ' imitator ' in the literal sense of the word. He did not mean that someone had been copying Carlyle word by word or sentence by sentence. He meant, to use the pertinent phrase of popular psychology, that in the tracts the ' spirit of Carlyle ' could be seen at work. To use another term, which is both common and unexplained, he meant that, if the writer were not Carlyle himself, he had come under Carlyle's ' influence.' Again, Emerson has the saying, ' Institutions are the lengthened shadows of great men.' He meant that Buddhism, for instance, is ' filled with ' the spirit of the Buddha, or the school of Giorgione with the ' spirit ' of that great painter, or that the British Liberal Party of yesterday fell under the ' influence ' of Gladstone. And in this use of such words as ' influence ' or ' spirit ' popular psychology fastened upon an undoubted fact. It did not, it is

true, explain the fact, but it named it. And it named a fact or phenomenon of fellowship. When Emerson said ' institutions ' he meant ' societies ' considered as organized ' bodies.' And societies live by fellowship. In many instances the dominant ' influence ' in a society is some one great man. It then illustrates that fellowship of the greater with the less, the stronger with the weaker, of which mention was made in the last chapter. In such fellowships the less grow like the greater, the weaker like the stronger. Buddhism is like the Buddha ; Rugby School bears the marks of Arnold ; and so on. Further, each individual member of the society, just in proportion as he shares its ' spirit,' shares the ' spirit ' of its creator. Every Buddhist is in some degree ' under the influence ' of the Buddha ; every ' High Anglican ' ' has drunk ' more or less of the ' spirit ' of Newman ; and so on. In some way the ' personality ' of the ' master ' ' enters into ' the ' personality ' of the disciple, and alters him. It is an unexplained phenomenon, but it is a fact.

All this finds easy illustration in the realm of the Christian experience of Christ. Both the society of Christians called the Church, and every individual member of that society—just in so far as he has ' drunk of its spirit '—bears the marks of the ' influence ' of Jesus. The large part of mankind called ' Christendom ' is so used to the phenomenon that it readily recognizes it. Of this man and of that woman it has said, generation by generation, ' Here is a serious imitator, a true disciple, of Jesus Christ.' This particular and outstanding instance of the phenomenon is as unexplained and as certain as its other instances.

When it is said that every Christian 'has the spirit' of Christ, everything is meant that is meant when it is said of another that he 'has the spirit' of Muhammed, or Beethoven, or Knox. Is nothing more meant?

Both the Christian Church throughout the ages, and the typical individual Christians of all generations, have claimed that there is something more. To justify it many would turn first to the story of Pentecost in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. But what is it in that story that is here significant? Not the divided 'flame' or the 'gift of tongues,' for, whatever these were, they do not characterize the normal Christian experience. Nor is it peculiar that the 'influence' of Jesus on that day surpassed His 'influence' in 'the days of His flesh,' for not infrequently a great man's 'influence' has in other instances reached its zenith after his death. When a great life is 'seen whole' and pondered deeply, it may mean more for men than when it was being lived piecemeal. Many another hero besides Samson has been greater in death than in life. Here the influence of the spirit of Christ is not unique.

Something unique is reached with the claim that Jesus alone is 'perfect man,' for only the 'spirit' of one who is Himself perfect man could 'influence' in the right way every part of other men's lives. At the places where other masters err, or 'come short,' their 'influence' ought to be resisted, for there it would mar the nature of those who submit to it. The sequel of an utter faith is an absolute 'influence'; so an utter faith should only be yielded to a perfect man. Yet there is another and more significant

difference between the 'influence' of Christ and the 'influence' of other historical masters. At Pentecost, and ever since, the claim of the Christian has been that the 'influence' he receives, the 'spirit' of which he is conscious, is not the influence of one who is dead, but of one who is alive. No one confuses the 'influence' of a dead father with that of a living one. *Pace* the Spiritualists, no English Liberals today claim that they are daily under the 'influence' of a living Gladstone. Is there any analogy for such a claim? There is one. It has been drawn before, but it may be drawn again under this very word 'spirit.' In the Old Testament the Prophet speaks of the 'spirit' of God as the Christian speaks of the 'spirit' of Christ. The implications of the comparison will be drawn out later. The postponement explains why in this chapter 'spirit' is usually spelt with a small 's.' The Christian phenomenon is in some respects parallel to the phenomena of the 'influence' of the 'spirit' of men, and in some to the 'influence' of the 'spirit' of God. A curious proof of the latter fact may again be named. Some may think that the 'influence' of the Buddha is parallel to that of Jesus in both ways, but this is so only for those Buddhists who treat the Buddha as god as well as man. Whether the Buddha's teaching and life justify this is another question. The term 'influence' does not occur in the New Testament. The term 'spirit' occurs frequently, and with a bewildering variety of meanings, as reference to a Concordance will show. But the Concordance will also show that it is impossible to do full justice to the

New Testament use of 'spirit' by paraphrasing it as 'influence.'[1] Even when it speaks of the 'spirit' of a man it means more than this.[2] Besides, to express the idea of 'influence' it employs other turns of expression; for instance, it speaks of 'John's disciples' or 'Moses' disciples' when it wishes to name men who came under the 'influence' of these great teachers. When it says that the early Christians 'received' the 'Spirit of Christ,' or 'of God,' it does indeed imply that they were under the 'influence' of Christ or of God, but it implies this by saying something more. The early Christians were aware that they had fellowship with an unseen Someone. They could and did describe this Someone equally naturally as 'Christ,' 'the Spirit,' 'the Spirit of Christ,' or 'the Spirit of God.' And they so described their great Fellow, not at first by any process of ratiocination or theologizing, but inevitably—'without thinking about it,' as it were. They had the mystics' experience of Christ, and knew that they had it, as a man knows that he has fellowship with a friend—by direct experience. What less than all this could a man mean, for instance, who wrote, 'The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God'? The experience of the typical Christians of all ages bears the same witness. They are aware of *fellowship* with a *living* Person, and not merely of the 'influence' of a dead one.

Further, the first disciples made a clear distinction between the 'influence' that Jesus exerted upon

[1] e.g. Acts v. 9; Rom. viii. 26; 1 Cor. vi. 17; 2 Cor. iii. 17; John xvi. 13.
[2] e.g. Rom. viii. 16; 1 Cor. ii. 11; Luke i. 47; Heb. xii. 23.

them before He died and 'receiving the Spirit.' Or, rather, their accounts require that the second experience differed from the first, while it included it. Here there falls a particular instance of a use of terms already named. Of the earlier fellowship the term 'spirit' is never used. Its nature is expressed by the word 'disciples.' What was the difference? Or, rather, what were the differences? For there were two. The first can, perhaps, be best understood in the light of what was said above, and will be more fully said below, about the perfecting of Jesus' fellowship with man in His death.[1] The disciples' fellowship with Him could not be complete till His fellowship with them was complete. But further, and more obviously, the outstanding difference in the receiving of the Spirit at Pentecost, in contrast with the 'influence' of Jesus in earlier days, was a sense of inward power. Peter and his associates now undertook, and began to succeed in, two enterprises to which they had before been quite unequal—the conquest of sin in themselves and the conquest of the world for Christ. They had a new strength for both tasks, and they were conscious that this power was the power of indwelling God. They had not so thought of the 'influence' that Jesus had exerted so strangely upon them when He was on earth. If later thought came to see that that too had been divine, at the time they were not conscious that this was so. This is the more remarkable if, as the records assert,[2] John the Baptist had publicly foretold that a greater than he should presently come who should 'baptize with the

[1] pp. 55 f, 139 ff. [2] Mark i. 8.

Holy Spirit,' for in the Old Testament 'Holy Spirit' is synonymous with 'Spirit of God.' On the other hand, when Pentecost befell, the disciples at once described their experience by this phrase, as Peter's quotation from Joel shows. He said in effect, 'We know that Christ Jesus has baptized us with the Spirit of God.' So, if the last two paragraphs be taken together, we reach once more the conclusion that the Christian experience was of a great Comrade whose fellowship combined the phenomena of fellowship with men and with God. As already suggested, the implications for the doctrine of God will be discussed later. For many Christians in the first days who were not given to 'philosophizing,' as to many such Christians since, it sufficed that they lived by fellowship with an unseen and personal Spirit whom they knew to be both God and Christ.

VIII

THE 'SAINT' AND THE 'PERFECT'

ANOTHER of the leading terms of the New Testament is 'saint.' This English word has fallen on evil days. In consequence, modern English has no word with the exact connotation of the Greek word. 'Christian' comes nearest. Yet this term occurs only three times in the New Testament. Where a modern writer would say 'the Christians,' a New Testament writer said 'the saints.' There is a difference, however, for while 'Christian' denotes primarily that a man is in a given relation to Christ, 'saint' denoted that a man was in a given relation to God. The definition of the nature of the relation is in both instances expressed by the word 'fellowship.' And here there emerges the distinctive idea of the use of the word 'saint' to describe a Christian—he who found himself in fellowship with Christ thereby found himself in fellowship with God. There is no need at this stage to discuss the problem whether any 'heathen' searchers after God have found Him. This question will recur later.[1] The story of the Old Testament, again, is the story of a search for God and a partial success in the quest. The very phrase 'partial success,' however, implies partial failure. There was still something more to win. Such a typical heir of

[1] pp. 151 f., 264 ff.

the Old Testament as Saul of Tarsus was at least subconsciously aware of this, even in the days before he 'knew Christ.' When he came to 'know Him,' he was fully aware of it. For the meagreness of starlight is only fully apparent when the sun rises. There is truth in the saying that he who is seeking God has already found Him, but it is not the whole truth. Of the Christian's fellowship with God, as of his fellowship with Christ, the three great words 'faith,' 'hope,' 'love,' may all be used; yet here too 'the greatest of these is love.' And—to take again the analogy of one of the finest types of human love—while in courtship there is true love, it is not yet that consummate knitting of soul with soul, life with life, that there is in true marriage. The New Testament disciples called themselves 'saints,' not because they claimed to be perfect or sinless or other-worldly, but because they had found God. He was now their intimate, as He had never been before. And He was their intimate, as they thought, in a way that was peculiar. None of the men round about them knew Him as they did. To express this conviction they chose the right word, for the prolonged discussion of the origin and meaning both of the Greek term (ἅγιος) and its Hebrew equivalent (קָדוֹשׁ), has ended in the assertion that, whatever else they are, they are words of religion, and that, among other uses, they express the relation that religion seeks to establish between a god and his worshippers. A 'Christian' was a 'saint.'

But the New Testament uses not only the noun 'saint' but the verb 'sanctify.' The two go together. A 'saint' *ipso facto* was 'sanctified.' The latter

word could be used of the beginning of the Christian life, and, when so used, it is a synonym for 'regenerate.' Again, 'sanctification,' in this one of its senses, describes the same experience, though from 'a different angle,' as 'justification.' The former, like the latter, is 'by faith,' and not by 'works.' It was no accident that two of Wesley's most famous sermons, one on 'Salvation' and one on 'Sanctification,' were based on the same text: 'By grace are ye saved through faith.' For 'salvation' and 'sanctification' involve each other. The one describes the Christian's fellowship with God from the negative point of view, the other from the positive. 'To be saved' is to be 'sanctified.'

Yet in the New Testament the word 'sanctification' has two other senses. It is natural that this should be so, as appears readily if other forms of fellowship are considered. For instance, there have been instances of true friendship between a gentleman and an imperfectly educated man, both 'gentleman' and 'educated' being used in their high meaning. When such a friendship begins, it cannot be complete. The half-educated man will speedily be aware that there is something in him that hinders a complete friendship, and there will be other hindrances of which he is not even aware as yet. But if the friendship persist and deepen in the right way, if the uneducated man seeks to change and to become like his friend, then two things will happen. He will become more and more fully aware of the things in himself that separate them, and, as he becomes aware, they will gradually cease to be. And when at length only a vestige of 'incompatibility' remains, the paradoxical phenomenon will

emerge that the uneducated man is more nearly a gentleman than he has ever been before, and yet is more painfully conscious of his shortcoming than ever before. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same truths hold of that higher fellowship, the fellowship of a man with God. Just in so far as the fellowship is 'real,' or living, the man will become aware of the many qualities in him that hinder a complete fellowship, and as he becomes aware of them and begins to hate them they will disappear. Their name is 'sin.' As the Christian grows less sinful, he feels more so! No one repents like a saint. This is paradoxical, but true. At the same time, the fellowship of God with a man means that the man changes—that he leaves behind the sinful—that he grows better and better. This process of growth in divine fellowship, as well as its beginning, may be called 'sanctification.'

Clearly a third use of the word is possible—it might be used, not only of the beginning of a process of change of character through fellowship, or of its course, but also of its completion. The uneducated man described above, when at last, through his fellowship with a true gentleman, he came to be a gentleman himself, might say, 'At last I am his friend.' For friendship has a consummation as well as a beginning. So long as there is in a man's nature any relic of the sinful, his fellowship with God cannot be complete. When everything that is sinful has gone, then, in the full sense, he is 'sanctified.' He enjoys an unmarred intimacy with the Most High. He is 'perfect,' for 'the chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.'

The word 'perfect' (τέλειος) is another term used

by the first Christians when they spoke of the Christian life, and it introduces the most daring of Bible axioms —the axiom that in some ways men are like God. For the most famous text in which the word 'perfect' occurs is the saying of Jesus, 'Ye therefore shall be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.'[1] Here men and God are in set terms compared. The passage does not by any means stand alone. This subject will be pursued later.[2] Here the pertinent question is, 'What exactly did the New Testament believer mean when he used the word "perfect"?'

The familiar quotation from the Scottish Catechism above gives the right idea. It speaks of 'the chief *end* of man.' Anything is 'perfect,' in the meaning of the Greek term, if it reaches and 'fulfils' the end or purpose for which it exists. A modern scientific phrase furnishes another definition—'The proper performance of function.' From this definition it follows that everything has its own kind of 'perfection.' The 'perfection' of a pebble is one, that of a diamond a second, that of a rose a third, that of a child a fourth, and so on. And the various kinds of 'perfection' may differ in degree of excellence. The excellence of a 'perfect' grain of salt is not as high as the excellence of a 'perfect' daisy, nor the latter as high as that of a 'perfect' robin. Of course, there is here involved the belief that there are 'qualitative' differences between various 'things,' and this in turn implies an idealistic philosophy, but it is generally allowed that only an idealistic philosophy, of some sort or other, is consonant with Christianity. It is

[1] Matt. v. 48. [2] e.g. in the chapter 'Man and Mankind.'

clear that the word ' perfect ' varies in connotation when used of different things. To say that in a garden a blade of grass ought to be as ' perfect ' as a rose does not mean that the two are entirely alike. On the other hand, it does imply that they are alike in some way. Similarly the great and daring text of Jesus, ' Ye therefore shall be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect,' admits both of phenomena of likeness and phenomena of difference between men and God. An examination of the context of the passage would give the key to both. The pertinent fact is, for the present subject, that the text may be properly paraphrased, ' Ye therefore shall fulfil the purpose for which men exist, as completely as God fulfils the purpose for which He exists ' ; ' Ye shall be as perfect men as He is perfect God.'

Here there emerges what may be called the ' paradox of growth,' for of everything that grows it is true that it cannot continue perfect unless it change. Any growing thing will furnish an instance. An expert gardener, going his rounds in April, might examine a rose-bush and say, ' That is a perfect specimen ; I will send it to the show.' But if, when he examines it again early in June, it has not changed, he will no longer call it ' perfect.' Similarly, many a mother counts her little one, born three months ago, ' perfect ' ; but if, when it is six months old, it is still the same, her heart begins to break ! The perfection of things that grow is always progressive. Not only does it admit of change ; it demands change. On the other hand, change destroys the perfection of things that do not grow. A perfect diamond, for instance, would

lose its perfection if it changed. The difference may be gathered into a pair of adjectives—there is a progressive perfection, and there is a consummate perfection. Yet some things that grow—almost all, indeed—may attain to the second as well as to the first. There comes a moment, for instance, when any further change spoils a rose. It has its zenith and decays. This is because, though it may still change, it can no longer progress. In the true sense, it can no longer 'grow.' Rather, it has begun to die. So long as it is a growing thing its perfection waits upon a given kind of change. It has a progressive perfection.

The philosopher Lotze said that man is not a person, but is only becoming one, and that only in God is personality consummate.[1] At any rate, in man personality is a thing that grows. It follows that the kind of perfection that is proper to man demands and depends upon change, and upon a right kind of change. Too many of the few Christians, scattered through the ages, who have claimed to be perfect, have ignored this truth. They have supposed that there was nothing more to do, that they had 'attained.' But this is the perfection of the Pharisee, not of the Christian. Paul had 'attained' it in his Pharisaic days—'As touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.' But Paul the Christian writes in the same passage, 'Not that I have already attained or am already made perfect.' The famous simile of the foot-race follows. It easily suits the notion of a progressive perfection. A racer may midway have reached just the point that

[1] *Microcosmus*, book ix., chap. iv.

he ought to have reached *at that stage*, but he does not therefore claim to have won. He ' presses on toward the goal.' The great passage has often been called ' paradoxical,' for presently the writer says, ' Let us therefore, as many as be perfect. . . .' Paul knew that the Christian life is a growth, and that there is a ' paradox of growth.' Change, of a given kind, is proper to the perfection of men. St. Bernard has the saying, ' The man is not good at all who does not wish to be better.'[1]

How does personality grow? By fellowship. It is an old saying now that ' persons feed on persons.' The home, again, or the nation, or the Church, give good examples. Even the secluded scholar feeds on those who wrote the books that he devours. No one, again, can be ' original ' who has not first ' assimilated.' The growth of personality, like its life, depends on fellowship. But on whose fellowship primarily? The answer of religion is ' God's.' ' As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.' The ' saint ' is a man who ' in Christ ' is in fellowship with God, and thereby his personality changes, and changes in the right way; thereby he becomes more and more fully a person; he changes from ' glory unto glory into the same image.' Will the process of progressive perfection ever pass into consummate perfection? The answer of many in the past was, ' Yes, in heaven.' But this answer seems to condemn men to a stagnant eternity. Besides,

[1] Gasquet's *Letters of St. Bernard*, p. 120. So Wesley: '[Perfection] is improvable. It is so far from . . . being incapable of increase that one perfected in love may grow in grace far swifter than he did before' (*A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, paragraph 26).

it is the destiny of true men to become like God; can they ever fully attain that end? Not the least bliss of 'heaven' will be the zest of eternal progress. The resources of all other kinds of fellowship run dry, but not of the fellowship of God.

It is not the purpose of this book to discuss subjects that are controversial among Christians, and so the question, 'Is "perfection" in any sense possible for Christians in this life?' is left on one side. But it may be noted in passing that the discussion above does something to make the meaning of the question clear. If it be true that the 'perfection' proper to man is always progressive—and surely this is so, at least for 'this life'—then any Christian who thinks that he is so 'holy' that there is nothing further for him to 'attain' is obviously mistaken. On the other hand, a man may, in a true sense, be called 'perfect' if he has reached the level suited to his stage of growth. In other words, immaturity is not necessarily imperfection. It is not, indeed, compatible with the kind of 'perfection' just called 'consummate,' but it is quite compatible with the kind called 'progressive,' and the latter is the kind proper to men. The only thing that is incompatible with 'progressive perfection,' when the term is used of persons, is sin. But 'sin' under what definition? If 'perfection' in men be a 'function' of fellowship with God, is the human or the divine account of 'sin' meant?[1]

In the examination above of the friendship that may exist between the uneducated and the gentleman, it

[1] For this distinction see the chapter on 'The Nature of Sin,' especially p. 210.

appeared that there might be shortcomings and *gaucheries* in the former of which at first he was not even aware. Much more, when a man enters into fellowship with God, there will long be habits and desires which in the austere scrutiny of heaven are black indeed, but of whose sinfulness the man is not at first even aware. 'Ideally' it is a sin to be polygamous, but did Abraham know it? 'Ideally' it is a sin to own slaves, but did Philemon think so? 'Ideally' it is a sin for a man to seek in exchange to get a greater benefit than he gives, but multitudes of Christians to-day, of undoubted sincerity, still do not think so.[1] Is this sort of sinfulness incompatible with progressive perfection? The more careful advocates of 'Christian perfection' have always hedged about their claim with reservations. It is quite legitimate that they should do so. And they have commonly said that they believed that a Christian could be 'sinless' only in the sense of freedom from '*known* sin.' The same truth may be put in a positive way. The 'perfection' of persons has been called above a 'function' of fellowship, and it has been said more than once that the heart of fellowship is love. The two words 'perfect' and 'love' are found together once in the New Testament—'God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him. Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement. . . . Perfect love casteth out fear. . . . We love because He first loved us. . . . This

[1] e.g. Professor Saintsbury. See his racy article, 'The Sin of Betting,' in *A Second Scrap-Book*.

commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.'[1] It is no wonder that many advocates of 'Christian perfection,' following the Anglican liturgy, have defined their doctrine as 'perfect love,' for in this culminant passage perfection, fellowship, and love are indissolubly knit. It expounds Christ's own definition of the Great Commandment, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' The question at issue, therefore, reduces to this, 'Can a Christian, in whose nature there are unawares vestiges of that which is sinful, love God with all his heart?' There is no doubt that the New Testament makes 'perfection,' even in this life, the Christian *aim*.[2]

Those who say that Christ's disciples only scale this Everest 'hereafter' will allow that they who set out for the summit 'here' are likely to climb highest before they die. It is to be remembered too that a master-passion is naturally intolerant. The ardent lover of beauty almost unawares discards the ugly; the intense lover of truth 'cannot away with' the false; so the eager lover of God is for ever restless under the least smirch of sin. He who loves anything with 'all his heart' bends himself 'naturally' to seek perfection in it. The paradox of growth again intrudes. A master-passion, far from being inconsistent with progress and effort, 'naturally' issues in both. Watch Beethoven

[1] 1 John iv. 16–21.

[2] The adjective τέλειος (perfect), and its corresponding noun and verb, are used in a way pertinent to this discussion at least fourteen times in the New Testament, and in almost every kind of document—twice in Matthew, six times in Paul, twice in Hebrews, twice in James, and twice in the Johannine books (Matt. v. 48; xix. 21; 1 Cor. ii. 6; xiv. 20; Eph. iv. 13; Phil. iii. 15; Col. i. 28, iv. 12; Heb. v. 14, vi. 1; Jas i. 4, iii. 2; John xvii. 23; 1 John iv. 18).

study music or Darwin science. Paul is true to life when, in the passage already quoted, he says in one breath, ' Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect,' and ' Not that I am already made perfect.'[1] He who loves grows like the thing he loves ; and he who grows aright is thereby at once perfect and imperfect. Even hereafter a Christian may for ever be both.

[1] Phil. iii. 12, 15.

IX

'CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY'

THERE is yet another semi-technical name for the Christian experience in the New Testament—'eternal life.' This phrase involves the claim that the Christian experience has a meaning for the future—that a pledge of immortality is part and parcel of it. The early Christian, and the earnest Christian in all ages, has known that death will not destroy his fellowship with Christ, but consummate it.[1] Christian thinkers, like others, have used many arguments in support of the doctrine of immortality, and these arguments have their place, but the Christian behaves about immortality as he behaves about God—he believes first and argues afterwards. This, of course, is not a singular proceeding. Practically all men, for instance, believe in the existence of the world of 'matter' before arguing about it—if they ever do argue about it at all. In fellowship with Christ, Christians 'know' that they 'lay hold of' immortality.

The ground of this belief is quite clear. While it is associated in the New Testament with the Resurrection

[1] It is only verbally that this contradicts the suggestion of the last chapter that in the fellowship of man with God there is eternal progress. Many a 'consummation' is also a fresh beginning; for instance, a true marriage is both. A growing tree has an annual 'consummation' when summer comes, yet, so long as the tree goes on growing, each one of the series surpasses its predecessors.

of Jesus Christ, in that book His Resurrection is never thought of as a mere historical event. It is always treated as the basis of the very fellowship that we are discussing. Even when this fellowship is related to the Holy Spirit, this connexion is not really lost, for, from Peter's sermon at Pentecost onwards, the Spirit is thought of as 'given' by the living Christ. The ground of the Christian belief in immortality can be put in a very few sentences—Christ is alive and immortal; I have fellowship with Him, and I am thereby becoming like Him; I too, therefore, shall live for ever.

The distinctive Christian tenet, then, about the Hereafter may be summed up in Paul's famous saying, 'Christ in you, the hope of glory.' About this all Christians of all ages have agreed, even though they have not always agreed about other doctrines of the Hereafter, and though they have not always put their beliefs about this fundamental doctrine in the same words. The discussion of the former difference is postponed,[1] but that of the latter cannot altogether be omitted here. In particular, account must be taken of the difference between the expression of Christian faith on this subject in the first century and in the twentieth. It will be well to state briefly how the New Testament disciple 'visualized' the fellowship of Christ and Christians in the Hereafter, and then to ask how far the Christian of to-day shares in this 'visualization.'

The central belief of the New Testament about the Hereafter may be summed up in the term 'the

[1] See the chapter on 'Fellowship and Eternity.'

Parousia.' Modern historians have shown how the word was used in the vernacular Greek of the first century for the 'progress' of a Roman Emperor through one of the 'provinces' of the Empire. So long as the Emperor stayed in Rome, he seemed as distant to a citizen of Egypt, for instance, as to-day the King of England seems to an Australian. Every one knows how hearty a welcome an English King receives if he visits a distant but loyal 'colony.' When a Roman Emperor visited a 'province,' there were greater grounds for joy. Such a one as Hadrian, visiting Egypt, brought the Egyptian for once into personal contact with the actual ruler of his land. This immediate access meant a far better opportunity of presenting grievances and requesting reforms than the tedious and tortuous 'appeals' to a distant court.[1] The 'presence'—for this, of course, is the literal meaning of 'Parousia'—of the Emperor was an infrequent but welcome boon. The early Christian borrowed the word when he wished to express a certain truth about his King, Christ Jesus. It has frequently been seen above that he thought of Christ as being in some sense present with him day by day. But it is equally certain that he thought of Him as being in some sense absent. It was not that Christ was powerless in the world, or that He had forsaken it, but there was a way in which He was rather at a distant capital of His realm than in the 'province' of it called 'earth.' Yet this absence was to end. There was sure to come a day when this King could celebrate a Parousia,

[1] Cf. the frequent administration of justice *in person* by such Oriental rulers as Akbar or Aurangzebe.

when He would come again, and His absence would be over. About the Hereafter, when it comes to detail, ' popular thought ' is never clear and consistent. Indeed, often it ' believes ' at one and the same time in contradictory details. Only philosophers seek to be quite consistent on any subject, and about this mysterious subject the indefiniteness and incoherence of ordinary thought reaches its climax. This phenomenon certainly marks the common ideas of to-day about the Hereafter, and it is not to be hastily assumed that the first Christians held one clear set of beliefs on the whole subject. But about some beliefs there is no doubt that there was both unanimity and clearness. The first of these was the belief that the risen Jesus had gone away and that He would come back.

The first conviction implies a second. The early Christian believed that Christ would come back *here*. Alike in New Testament times and to-day, many Christians believe both that a dying Christian goes away to be with Christ, and that the Christ will some day return to be with living Christians, but, while the first idea is the more prominent to-day, the second was the focus of New Testament thought. Even when a Christian of those days thought of a dead friend, he thought of him as awaiting a further event. He was to return with the Lord. There are Apocalyptic passages that speak of ' fire ' as the fate of the present universe, and at first sight they seem to mean that the world will be destroyed and ' done with,' but for our present purpose it is better to build the exegesis of Apocalyptic passages on the plainer teaching of other

writings than *vice versa*. The plainer passages about the Hereafter clearly expect that ' this world ' is to have a place in the future, and among the Apocalyptic passages there are none in which the ' fire ' is the last word. Always another scene ensues. There appears ' a new heaven and a new earth,' and these are so called because they are in some ways the old ' heaven and earth ' over again. In other words, ' fire ' purifies as well as destroys. In the Apocalypse it burns sin out of the world, but it does not destroy the universe. A sin-purged world is indeed ' new,' but it is still the old one renewed. The New Testament Parousia is to take place *here*.

Again, a third element in the belief has also been implied. The Parousia was thought of as a ' consummation of all things.' It was the end and climax of one process, even while it was the beginning and foretaste of another. It was much more than the mere repetition of the present kind of life *minus* sin. Even of things that were good it was to be culmination. And with this there went the conviction that in the Parousia, as in the present, human nature would have what are now called both ' psychical ' and ' physical ' sides. There is no hint of any ' purely ' or ' merely ' spiritual future. It does not enter into the mind of any New Testament writer even to discuss such an idea, and men are never so sure of a thing as when they take it for granted without discussion. The Parousia of Christ, for the first Christian, was a return to this world of bodies and things, and it was to bring this world's consummation. Even the Johannine books, whose centre of thought is the reality and

pre-eminence of the 'unseen' and the 'spiritual,' treat this belief as an axiom that need not be argued.[1]

It may seem at first sight that much of the last few paragraphs is remote from the subject of 'the fellowship of Christ.' But this is not really so, as the very term 'Parousia' shows. It denoted the consummation of the believers' fellowship with Christ, and the consequences of that consummation. This is the best point from which to ask the next question: How far does the Christian experience of to-day agree with these findings of the New Testament about the Hereafter? It agrees with the fundamental tenet that even the ripest fellowship that any Christian, or group of Christians, enjoys with the risen Christ now has a future consummation. It is coming to agree further—though at this point its 'way of putting things,' its 'thought-forms,' differ more widely from those of the first century—that there is a place for much of the 'here' in the 'hereafter.' It thinks that such things as friendship and art and knowledge and all the higher intimacies of life will somehow survive and heighten. Further, as science day by day unveils more and more of the use and loveliness and wonder of what used to be described by the ugly term 'matter,' it may come to think that 'the world of things' will in some way have a place in the Hereafter. Many Christians to-day have rebelled against the doctrine of the resurrection of the 'identic bodies' of men, and some have taken refuge in the idea of a 'purely spiritual' Hereafter, but there are probably few who in their ordinary thinking assume that the 'world of things' is just to

[1] e.g. John v. 28 f.; 1 John ii. 28.

disappear. Thought is moving towards the reassertion of the belief in the Parousia in the terms of the twentieth century. More will be said about this later.[1] Here the chief point is that in Christian thought to-day about the Hereafter the focus of the curve, as of old, is the experience of fellowship with the living Christ. This fellowship is an incipient immortality. And here again it somehow resolves into a fellowship with God. 'The Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are the temple' of the future city; 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.'[2]

[1] See the chapter on 'Fellowship and Nature.'
[2] Rev. xxi. 22; John xvii. 3.

X

'OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST'

As already suggested more than once, the Christian's fellowship with Christ is not a fellowship of equals. The term 'friendship' is perhaps the commonest word for the latter. If there be a 'friendship' between two people who are manifestly unequal, men marvel at the phenomenon, and, if they seek to explain it, generally do so by showing that in the 'friendship' it is tacitly agreed by both parties that the differences—whether of rank, age, or education—shall be ignored. The word 'friendship' may be used of the fellowship between Christ and a Christian; indeed, it is so used once or twice in the New Testament—for there is a sense in which Jesus humbles Himself to be the equal of men; yet, when the word is used, there is at once a feeling that something is omitted. The Christian fellowship is a fellowship of unequals. Such fellowships, however, are of different kinds. The fellowship between teacher and scholar is one, that between parent and child is another, that between confessor and penitent is a third. When, however, the first Christians sought for a term to express the peculiar nature of their fellowship with their great Unequal, they turned usually to none of these. The term of their choice was 'Lord.' More than any other word, this epitomizes the findings of their experience about Christ.

The Greek word so translated, like the English word itself, could be used in several ways. Sometimes, for instance, it was hardly more than a title of respect, and meant much the same as 'sir' in English. But it is not doubtful which of its meanings was most in the minds of those who first used it of the Risen Christ. In their environment the word had a very common use, which has now disappeared, because the institution to which it was pertinent has gone. Paul gives the key to it by using another term of himself—'Paul, the bondman of Jesus Christ.' In the cities of the Graeco-Roman world the majority of the population was in bondage. Slavery was part and parcel of universal human life. To describe it there were two correlative terms—'lord' and 'bondman.' These would be heard as often in the streets of Tarsus or Corinth as 'employer' and 'employed,' or 'master' and 'men,' in the streets of London or New York to-day. When the first Christians wished to describe the nature of the relation that held between their great Fellow and themselves they borrowed a term from slavery!

What was the ground of this remarkable choice? It was not, of course, because slavery was coercive. No fellowship comes by coercion, least of all the Christian's fellowship with Christ. On this side, the comparison with slavery is repulsive. Yet the word was chosen! The reason was that the Christian felt that he was 'not his own'; that, like the slave, he belonged to someone else. To use other words, he knew that he 'had no business of his own' at all. By day and by night, awake or asleep, speaking or silent, at rest or at work, in the 'outside world' or

in his home life, he was always and everywhere another's. This was the nature of his fellowship with Christ, or at the least he knew that this ought to be its nature, and he wished that it should be. Seeking a word by which to say this, he found just one in the speech of his time. Though he borrowed it from slavery itself, he did not flinch. His favourite name for Christ was 'Lord.' And it has been the favourite name of Christians for Him ever since.

Unhappily, with the coming of 'nominal Christianity' the meaning of the word has often been ignored. Men have cried, 'Lord, Lord!' and 'done not the things that [He] said.' To-day 'Lord' is perhaps the commonest Christian word—and the most meaningless. Yet with the serious Christian the word has always retained its full sense. It has so retained it even in lands where slavery has long since disappeared. And here another fact finds easy illustration. In such lands it is universally agreed that the institution of slavery is 'unnatural'—that one man ought not to have the absolute mastery and bestowal of another. Freedom is held to be the inalienable right of all. Yet in such lands it seems to Christians so 'natural' that Christ should be absolute master of themselves and their all that, when they fail to sustain this relation to Him, they blame themselves for refusing it, and not Him for claiming it. They choose to be His bondmen; they are wilfully slaves. To whom is such utter submission due? Freemen, unless they be atheists, answer with one consent, 'Only to God.' It may seem at first sight that it would be proper to yield this submission to a perfect man, but this is not really so.

One who is no more than perfect man might give mistaken guidance, for omniscience does not seem to be a quality of perfect manhood. Or a perfect man might lay down a rule that would bring failure with obedience, unless the rule had the hidden support of the omnipotence which is only proper to God. Rightly or wrongly, Christians have always in practice delighted to acknowledge in Christ a Lordship which belongs properly to God alone.

This recalls a second common use of 'Lord' in New Testament times. The study of the *papyri* and *ostraca* of Egypt has shown that the term was a common title for such gods as Serapis, and also that 'the Lord' was a usual name, at least in the East, for the Emperor.[1] These two uses of the term suggest at once the phenomenon of Caesar-worship. Again, in the Greek translation of the Old Testament 'the Lord' is the regular rendering of the Hebrew's unspoken name for God. In such an environment what did an early Christian mean when he called an unseen person 'The Lord'? Some think that when he did so, he borrowed the term from these uses rather than from slavery. Yet the great variety in the use of the term needs again to be remembered. From the fact that the same term is used of Christ and of God it cannot be immediately deduced that Christ is God, for the word is also used of others. But if its use of Christ be studied a gradual development in its meaning may be traced. At first some hearer of Jesus' teaching might use it to mean no more than an Englishman means by 'sir.' But, while this is the starting-point

[1] Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 353 ff.

of its use of Christ, the goal is far different. Gradually the word, when used of Him, deepens in meaning. It deepens until it begins to approximate to the sense in which it is used of God Himself. This evolution may be traced in such a series of texts as those in the margin.[1] Finally the stage is reached when New Testament writers could use the term alternately of God and Christ in single passages without feeling any jar in the juxtaposition,[2] or could write a sentence in which the term may either mean Christ or God,[3] or could apply to Christ an Old Testament passage in which the word is used of God.[4] The Fourth Evangelist's phrase, 'My Lord and my God,' in which he calls Christ God outright, is only unique as the climax of a process. It presents, on any interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, the final finding of the New Testament Christian about his experience of the Risen Christ. He counted his fellowship with Christ to be fellowship with God.

[1] Mark vii. 28, xi. 3; Luke vi. 46, x. 1, xxiv. 34; Matt. x. 24, xxi. 3; John iv. 1, xiii. 13; 1 Thess. i. 1 (and parallels), v. 28 (and parallels); Rom. x. 9; 1 Cor. xii. 3; Eph. iv. 5; Col. iv. 1; Heb. i. 10; John xx. 28. For Paul the passages are, of course, peculiarly abundant.

[2] e.g. Jas. v. 4–15; Acts viii. 24–6; Rom. xiv. 1–12.

[3] e.g. 1 Cor. ii. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 3.

[4] e.g. 1 Thess. v. 2; Heb. i. 10.

PART II

THE IMPLICATES OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

XI

SOME POSTULATES

THE preceding pages have been chiefly descriptive, though not wholly so, for, as stated in the Forewords, it is not possible in any study exactly to draw the line between description and explanation. Yet, here as elsewhere, the distinction, though not logically precise, is convenient. Some attempt will now be made to state, examine, and justify the principal implicates of the Christian experience, for this is what 'explanation' means. Such an attempt seems to the writer to demand certain postulates. In this chapter these are laid out, with some other preliminary considerations.

The implicates of the Christian experience may be conveniently classed under three heads: as they relate respectively to 'God,' or 'man,' or 'nature.' Here, again, the division is not logically exact. For, in examining any one of these subjects, the other two are involved. This will appear frequently below. Some degree of repetition is therefore inevitable, but this has been kept at a minimum. The difficulty occurs in all studies, for he who seeks to understand one thing, always finds that he can only do so if first he understands all other things! The word 'nature' is here used to denote the world of beings lowlier than

man. A term is needed for this world, and there does not seem to be a better one.

It is not possible, of course, to explore all that here opens to the view, for that would end in an attempt like Lord Bacon's—we should need to take all knowledge to be our sphere! It suffices if discussion is carried to the point where Christian thought impinges on the general sum of knowledge. Again, of the implicates of any given experience, some follow from it more immediately and certainly than others, and so share more nearly its fate. If the Christian experience is a valid phenomenon at all, certain truths ensue of necessity; others are probable; others have some degree of likelihood. Broadly speaking, the more important truths follow more immediately and more certainly than the less important. So to speak, some are central and others peripheral. The latter are given small space below. Of the former, some receive briefer discussion than others, not because they are less important, but because the writer found less to say about them, that had not already been well said by others, from the point of view of the present study.

It is perhaps necessary at this point to recall two psychological postulates named in the chapter of Forewords. The first is the assumption that in human nature there is what is called a 'subconscious' realm as well as a 'conscious.' The second is that human nature is 'societary' as well as 'individual.' It is not easy always to assume the truth of these two statements without seeming to 'take a side' in the controversies about them that divide psychologists

themselves. This, however, has been attempted, for their bearing upon theological truth does not usually depend upon any particular solution of those differences. It is enough, for the most part, that the truths be admitted. The second of them used to be summed under Comte's phrase 'the solidarity of the race.' If taken in its wider sense, it includes the problems that gather under such words as 'heredity' and 'environment.' Here, in particular, theology is for the most part satisfied if the phenomena in question be admitted as facts. So long as the fact is allowed that if an individual belongs to a given society, or set of societies, this does make real and great differences to him—differences that are largely independent of his control—the answer to the particular question how this comes to pass is almost indifferent to theology. If the 'influence' of a society—for instance, of a home—pass to one of its inmates because he is one of its inmates, the difficult problem whether this 'influence' passes by 'heredity' or 'environment,' 'nature' or 'nurture,' or in part by both, may be left on one side. It is enough that it be admitted that man is not merely 'individual'—that he is part and parcel of society as well—and that this fact 'makes a difference' to him, willy-nilly, even though, especially as his 'freedom' develops, he may be able to react upon it and affect its result. It will be seen that these psychological postulates about the 'subconscious' and 'solidarity' are closely connected with each other.

It is necessary to name also three philosophical postulates that are continually assumed below. None of them is easy to state in terms that will be readily

understood by a reader who is unused to philosophical study. He may even resent their inclusion,[1] for there are not a few people who demand that such questions as the nature of God, the nature of man, and so on, should be discussed without any reference to that 'study in ultimates,' philosophy. This, however, may not be. The first postulate is a given doctrine of 'transcendence' and 'immanence.' These terms used often to be defined spatially. God was thought of as being in the universe—this was the doctrine of 'immanence'; He was also thought of as being outside it—this was the doctrine of 'transcendence.' To-day philosophy operates with the concept that He is not subject to 'the time-space condition' at all. To use more familiar terms, for Him there is no past nor present nor future; for Him no here nor there. For Him there is an 'eternity' or 'infinity,' that qualitatively differs from and surpasses time and space, even while it informs and underlies them. No one, of course, whose own mind is subject to the 'categories' of time and space, can fully conceive what this means. It is an ingredient in the definition of 'infinity,' and so surpasses 'finite' minds. Yet it is not possible to discuss the nature of God at all unless the mind seek to 'look beyond itself.' The speculative problems here involved are not now discussed. It is taken for granted that theistic philosophers are right when they ascribe such 'transcendence' and 'immanence' to God. This may perhaps be a little clearer when some of the instances

[1] If he likes, he may get over the difficulty by 'skipping' the rest of this chapter, the whole of the next, and from the bottom of p. 120 in chapter xiii.

of this dual concept in Christian theology have been examined below.

It is plain that on this account of God ' transcendence ' is not inconsistent with ' immanence.' While God is thought of as not being subject to the conditions of time and space, it does not follow that He has nothing to do with ' this present world.' To ' transcend ' a thing does not necessarily mean to ' let it alone.' Rather to ' transcend ' is to include what is surpassed. A man's mind may be said to ' transcend ' an animal's. This means that it includes all that there is in an animal that may be called ' mind '—and much more. Similarly, the claim that the divine ' mind ' ' transcends ' the ' world of space and time,' does not mean that it has nothing to do with that world, but that it includes, while it surpasses it. Of two concentric circles the larger includes, while it surpasses, the smaller. This too is a spatial metaphor, but if it be remembered that it is a metaphor, it may give a hint of what is meant. God is ' in ' the world that He surpasses. This too may grow a little clearer as it finds illustrations.

The second philosophical postulate centres in the term ' antinomy.' It sometimes happens that the human mind approaches nearest to the statement of some truth that lies on the borderland of human knowledge, by putting side by side two statements which, again to the human mind, are logical contradictories. The best known illustrations happen to belong to the theological realm. The doctrine of the Trinity says that both unity and severalty are found in God—that He is one and yet three. If the subject dealt with

were one that fell entirely within the realms of arithmetic and logic, the statement would be a mere absurdity. But it belongs to the realm where human thought begins to lose itself. In other words, it belongs to the realm where man may know something, yet does not and cannot know everything. It is in this realm, if anywhere, that the use of antinomy is justifiable. Another example is furnished by the doctrine of the nature of Christ. He is declared to be both God and man, which requires, for instance, that He is both infinite and finite. To human thought this is a contradiction, yet, here too, an expression is sought for a truth which, by its very nature, a finite mind cannot fully grasp. Christian thought declares that there are 'mysteries,'—that is, truths that it can partially 'know,' yet only partially. And it not infrequently expresses its partial knowledge by an 'antinomy.'

While the best known illustrations of this philosophical idea are theological, it is by no means confined to theology. There are familiar examples in the statements that a thing that grows, alters yet remains the same, and that in fellowship of any true kind, two persons become one yet remain two. Both these phenomena contradict logic and arithmetic. They will suggest to some the term 'paradox.' An 'antinomy' is a paradox, not of word, but of thought. Students of philosophy know how long a controversy there has been about the validity of the partial knowledge implied by the term. Here this controversy is left on one side, and it is assumed that there are truths which men's minds may 'know in part,' yet may not know

fully, and that this partial knowledge is not useless. Perhaps the ' new physics ' give the best aid to the non-philosophical. For instance, it has been argued that to a creature with a mind that could only think ' in one dimension,' a circle would seem to be finite, yet to have no known limit. But to a mind ' of two dimensions ' its limit is clear. Similarly, to a mind subdued to ' two dimensions ' the surface of a sphere would seem both to have no end and yet to be finite ; to a mind of ' three dimensions ' this is no puzzle. Common thought stops here, but not so the ' new physics.' It tells us that there is reason to think that the universe of stars is limited, yet that a mind that only thinks in three dimensions cannot conceive its limits ! It adds that to a mind which thought in four dimensions there might be no puzzle. And it begins to claim some knowledge, incomplete yet not altogether mistaken, of what a world of ' four dimensions ' is. It will appear from this illustration that the two philosophical postulates named so far may not be disconnected with each other. Any reader of philosophical bent will notice that they are definitely ' postulates.' They are assumed, not debated. The writer does not wish to hide his opinion that theology is incomplete without philosophy, and that the truth of some of its tenets depends upon the truth of a given type of philosophy. For one type of philosophy explains the Christian experience, another explains it away.

This brings us to the third philosophical postulate. There never has been, and there never can be, a Christian philosophy that is not in some sense ' idealist.'

That is, Christianity demands a belief that there is a God, that He is 'spirit,' that 'spirit' is something *sui generis* and not a product of 'matter,' and that it is of supreme value, particularly in comparison with 'matter.' In such a claim there is involved an appeal to at least two criteria of truth, and therefore a recognition of their validity. For 'spirit' includes 'mind'; or rather, 'mind' is 'spirit' on its 'intellectual' side. Consequently, the Christian philosopher is committed to a belief in the value of 'mind,' and he must not only allow, but demand, that his teaching be tried by an 'intellectual' criterion. Again, the word 'value' involves the acceptance of another criterion of truth, or rather a demand for it. Perhaps the chief achievement of recent philosophic thought has been its elucidation of this fact. It is not possible to compress what is meant into a few sentences. As the appeal of the first criterion connects with the 'mind' or 'intellect,' so the appeal of the second connects with the 'will.' It must suffice here to point out that men do, as a matter of fact, count some aims or 'ends' in life 'higher' or 'nobler' than others, and hold that the human 'will' 'ought' to prefer these. On this fact the criterion of 'value' bases. It occurs in different ways in James, in Ritschl, in Kant, in Augustine, in Plato, and in many others. Some begin to suggest that a third criterion should be added—that, as the first test corresponds to the 'intellectual' side of 'spirit' or 'personality,' and as the second corresponds to the 'voluntative,' so there is a third that corresponds to the 'emotional.' Small progress, has, however, yet been made with this argument. Even the first two criteria are defined and

used in manifold ways. Yet Christian apologists have of late made use of the ' criterion of value,' as well as the ' criterion of intellect,' and have not unsuccessfully vindicated Christianity at the bar of both. Both are used below without hesitation. The phrase ' pragmatic test ' occurs sometimes as a synonym for ' criterion of value.' Some things are held to be true, on this ground in part—that they serve ' ends ' of ultimate ' worth.'

XII

THE THEISTIC ARGUMENT

THERE are only two reasons for believing in God. The one is that a man 'knows God,' the other that he 'cannot do without Him.' Of the former it has been usual to say that it is 'the argument of the mystic,' and that it can have no validity for anyone except the man who says 'I know God.' Both these assertions are now being challenged. Such phrases as 'the argument of the mystic' used to mean 'no argument at all,' for 'mysticism' was counted too obvious a delusion to demand the attention of 'men of science.' But as the focus of scientific interest has moved from the 'physical' sciences to the 'psychological'—or rather, as the scope of science has been enlarged to include phenomena of mind as well as of 'matter'—it has ceased to be possible to ignore the mystics, for the phenomenon of 'mysticism' is too constant and too frequent in history to be treated as an instance of abortion. And in particular, it has been discerned that the typical Christian experience is 'mystical,' that it does involve the claim 'I know God, for I hold fellowship with Him in Jesus Christ,' and it is hardly possible to treat this large phenomenon as a mere 'freak.' At any rate it has to be accounted for. And this brings us to the second of the criticisms quoted

above. It is true that one man cannot say 'I know God' merely because another man says that he does. The experience cannot be simply transferred. But none the less, the phenomenon that men say 'We know God' is a phenomenon that needs examination and explanation. This is increasingly admitted to-day. One of the most remarkable of recent books on religion maintains that there is a special faculty by which men are aware of God, and that it is quite a common faculty.[1] Whether this is so or not, the problem remains, 'Why do so many say, "We know God"?' The theist replies, 'Because they do know Him.'[2]

All other theistic arguments may be summed under the phrase 'We cannot do without God.' In metaphysical terms, 'He is the necessary pre-supposition of what we find to be true.' It is clear that the form of the argument, when drawn out and developed, will vary with every different theistic philosophy. Yet fundamentally the argument is one. The famous 'four proofs' of the eighteenth century,[3] whose best-known exponent was Wolff, built on the philosophy and science current in that period. Kant attacked the philosophy and claimed to have destroyed the proofs. But he reared a philosophy in turn, and as he did so he developed a 'proof' for the existence of God that grew out of his own type of philosophy. In effect he said, 'I find that there is a world of ethics, and that a belief in God is one of its necessary presuppositions; I cannot do without Him.' The same is true of every

[1] Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*. (English translation.)
[2] This may be so even though some of them make mistakes about Him. Cf. p. 115.
[3] The 'ontological,' 'cosmological,' 'teleological,' and 'moral' proofs.

theistic thinker,—of Schleiermacher, for instance, and of Hegel, of the Personal Idealists and the theistic Pragmatists, and so on. The formal proofs of the existence of God necessarily vary with the kind of philosophy accepted by the thinker who urges the proofs, yet while they vary, they are alike. They all take at bottom the same form. Every theistic thinker says in turn, 'I believe in God, for truth, as I see it, requires this.' A rather singular consequence has followed from this fact. Age by age some philosophy has become current and 'assured'; theologians have accepted it as true; they have used the arguments for the existence of God that are consonant with it; the day has come when it has been superseded, or at least amended, and away go the theological 'proofs' with it! Not a few have claimed at such moments that Christianity is at last proved false. In reality it is not bound up, to live or to die, with any particular philosophy. It could not survive, of course, if some day an atheistic philosophy were proved true. Nor, as the author thinks, could it survive if every kind of idealistic philosophy were found wanting. This does not mean that there are no 'pragmatic' proofs of theism, but only that the 'pragmatic' proofs are not enough if taken alone. Granted so much, however, there seems no reason to think that any other vicissitude in philosophy need be fatal to Christianity. It will only mean that the 'theistic argument' needs one more revision—that the argument, 'I cannot do without God,' takes another form. This argument, reduced to these simplest terms, is perennial.

The two arguments both give evidence upon a second point—the character of God. No argument perhaps has ever been adduced that proved, or seemed to its advocates to prove, the mere existence of deity. They all give, or claim to give, guidance as to the kind of God that there is. The deity of Hegel, for instance, differs from the deity of Kant, just because the former's theistic argument differs from the latter's. Indeed, it is a philosophical commonplace that the mere quality-less existence of anything can neither be conceived nor proved. The argument, 'My system of thought demands that there is a God,' cannot avoid also making some statements about Him. Herbert Spencer ended by saying quite a number of things about an agnostic's 'god'! Similarly, the 'mystic' who says 'I know God,' is always able to say something about the God whom he knows. Of course, he will always say as well that much remains unknown to him. Even when two men hold fellowship with each other, there are always unsolved mysteries in each for the other, and especially for a small-minded man who 'knows' a large-minded man. How much more, then, will there be untracked reaches in the divine nature, however intimate a 'saint' may be with God? But this does not mean that the 'saint' knows nothing about Him. To 'know' existence without qualities is impossible.

It does not belong to the present study to pursue further the general subject of theistic proof, or even to discuss the difficulties that the brief statement just made raises. It has been made merely to lead up to an examination of the particular Christian doctrine of God, as implied in the fellowship of a Christian

with Christ. The 'ordinary' Christian and the philosophically-minded Christian say, each in his own way, 'My experience is such that I cannot do without God.' Again, both say, 'In and by my fellowship with Christ, I know God.' So that, in the case of Christianity, the two proofs interweave. While the following chapters deal principally with the question 'What *kind* of God does the fellowship of men with Christ require?' the answer to this question of course continually implies the *existence* of God.

XIII

OUR FATHER, GOD

It has already been seen that they who 'know' Christ, to use the New Testament word in its deep New Testament sense, thereby 'know' God also. This is the uniform witness of all the 'saints' for almost two millenniums. They claim too that this 'knowledge' of God, this fellowship with Him, includes some knowledge of His character. What knowledge?

This is one of the places where it is clearest that Christianity has need both of the 'historic Jesus' and the 'living Christ.' For the Christian experience of God to-day is of 'Our Father in heaven.' Whence does this knowledge spring? From the story of the 'historic Jesus' and what He knew and revealed about God. Without the Gospels the Christian's knowledge of God would not be articulate, or rather, as distinctively a *Christian* knowledge of God, it would not exist. On the other hand, the mere record that God seemed to Jesus to be so-and-so, of itself would be of no service in the daily life of the soul. The Christian experience of God in Christ age by age verifies for itself the revelation of the nature of God made by Jesus. It finds Him perennially to be what Jesus 'declared' Him to be—'The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath

declared Him.'[1] Yet the word 'declared' is inadequate to the Greek; it says that Jesus 'explained' God.

When, however, the revelation of Jesus about God is examined, it is found that He starts from the Old Testament, even while He passes beyond it. This needs to be remembered, even though there is no need to repeat here in detail the story of the evolution of the Hebrew idea of God. One or two facts may be recalled. The final Old Testament doctrine of God was monotheistic. This is fundamental, yet half its meaning is lost if it is stated alone. The Hebrew race reached the belief that there is only one God without surrendering belief in His personality. It was in this combination of ideas that Israelite religion was unique. Elsewhere, either the belief in the personality of God perished, or the belief in many gods survived. Christianity and Islam have here inherited the Hebrew idea. It has grown nowhere except from Hebrew roots. The Jew is teaching mankind that God is both one and personal.

Further, it is of great importance in the doctrine of God, not only that error be excluded, but that the elements of truth be rightly related to each other. Mistakes in emphasis are often serious, and nowhere more so than here. The Hebrew mind, in its final phase, not only held to the personality of the one God, but made ethical holiness its master characteristic.[2] To use a good old word, holiness was 'architectonic' in the concept; it gave the whole set of notions about

[1] John i. 18.

[2] This is so, whatever the earlier history of the meaning of the term 'holy.'

God their right perspective and plan. The notion that God was loving was not absent, but it was not primary. Again, while such terms as 'omnipotence,' 'omniscience,' 'transcendence,' 'immanence,' 'infinity,' 'eternity,' do not occur—for the Hebrew was no philosopher—yet there was the practice of the ideas, without their metaphysical elaboration. In the last few Old Testament centuries, to say the least, it never occurred to a Hebrew that there might be things that his God could not do, or things that He did not know, or places where He was not to be found, and so on. But, while the Jew practised these attributes—if the expression may be allowed—he treated them always as the servants of the holiness of God. It was dominant, they were ancillary. The relation of qualities to each other often determines character as much as the presence or absence of given qualities. This is so of God as well as of men.

Jesus 'grew up with' this Old Testament concept of God, yet His own doctrine of God was not a mere inheritance. The change that He made has been so often elucidated that it need be no more than stated. Some would say that He interchanged the ideas of holiness and love—that He made holiness secondary and love primary. But this is inaccurate. If a geometrical metaphor were used, it would not come from a circle but from an ellipse. All would depend, not on one 'centre,' but on two 'foci,' and the 'foci' would be holiness and love, love and holiness. Yet even this is inadequate. When Jesus' concept of love is examined, it is found to include holiness; when His account of holiness is examined, it is found to include

love. And by 'holiness,' again, a quality is meant that embraces 'righteousness,' for 'righteousness' is 'holiness' in behaviour towards men. The fact is that in any one's character the various qualities do not exist alone, but that each takes colour from the others. The term 'love' itself, for instance, denotes different characteristics as it is used of a botanist's love of flowers, a philanthropist's love of the poor, and a mother's love of her child. Again, the love of two mothers will vary if the one's character adds honesty to love and the other's adds deceit. For the thought of Jesus holiness and love are interpenetrative in the character of God; each takes colour from the other; indeed, each is the other. When a Christian begins the Lord's Prayer with the words 'Our Father which art in heaven,' he is already thinking 'Hallowed be Thy name,' and this involves 'Holy is Thy nature.' God is so truly man's Father that He 'cannot away with' man's sin. For it is characteristic of love at its highest that it is discontented until its object is perfect. The 'architectonic' quality in the character of the 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ' is holy love. It is of this God that the New Testament speaks; it is of Him that the Christian has experience.[1]

Another consequence of the concept that God is personal may be named. The qualities ascribed to

[1] McGiffert, in his recent book *The God of the Early Christians*, Lecture I, controverts the idea that Jesus' doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood was original and central. But, in quoting from contemporary teachers, he seems to underrate the importance of emphasis, referred to above, and, in dealing with Jesus's own doctrine, to forget that a body of teaching may irresistibly give a certain impression even though it may not very often use a given word.

God can only be thought of on some analogy. On what analogies shall the concepts—incomplete, yet true as far as they go—of such qualities as omnipotence be based? In the instance of love and holiness and righteousness, an analogy is frankly drawn from man. Our knowledge of love, for instance, is not drawn from plants, or even from animals, but from men, and especially from home. This is why the word 'Father' is the least inadequate to use of God. Some cry out against the 'anthropomorphism' of this procedure. This subject is discussed separately.[1] Yet, if such a proceeding be legitimate in these instances, it would seem to be legitimate in others. Too often the omnipotence of God, for instance, has been compared to such phenomena as gravitation. The reason is that gravitation is so mighty. But it is only inanimate force. Power in God is surely rather analogous to power in that other person—man. Here not mere blind force is meant, but force under the sway of will—that is, under the sway of personality. In comparison with God's omnipotence man's freedom is of course puny—as indeed, on closer thought even gravitation is found to be—yet it gives the best starting-point for the concept of God's power. This power is that of a person. It is power under the sway of will, the will of the Father. Similarly, the best analogue for 'immanence' is not the supposed omnipresence in the material universe of such a thing as ether, but the way in which the mind of a man 'inhabits' his body. In the latter instance there is really no thought of the mind's being spread through so much space at all,

[1] See Section B in the Appendix.

even though it is thought of as being limited to the space occupied by the body. Perhaps, too, the easiest way to approach the notion of 'transcendence' is to meditate upon what we mean when we say that the mind is 'in' the body. For the 'mind' or 'soul' is other and higher than the body, even while it is 'in' the body; it surpasses what it inhabits, and this in other than spatial ways. The change of thought on this side, in relation to the nature of God, appears in the gradual superseding of the term 'omnipresence' by the term 'immanence,' and in new ways of defining 'transcendence.' No merely spatial phenomena are meant, even though a relation to space is in question! Of course a mystery remains, but then is not this so even when the relation of a man's mind to his body is examined? Nor does it follow that the universe must be thought of as the body of God, for it is allowed that the analogy falls short of the whole truth, as all analogies always do, but here in a climacteric way. It will be noticed that the term 'transcendence' here accompanies the term 'immanence.' When we say that the mind of man is 'immanent' in his body, we mean that the human mind 'transcends' space. Again, as already hinted, in an elementary way it also 'transcends' the body. For instance, it knows many things beyond it; it gathers the information of the universe and holds it in a unity. And at death, at least in the thought of many, it survives the body. Far more than this, of course, is meant when we speak of the divine transcendence, for God is defined as pure Spirit, as will appear below. But, while far more is meant, both under the term 'immanence' and the

term ' transcendence,' the best starting-point in considering both is our knowledge of man, for Christianity counts God personal, and man too is personal. When the pertinent phenomena in his nature are examined, ' immanence ' and ' transcendence ' are found to imply each other, and all notions of mere extension in space disappear.[1]

Again, what is the best starting-point as one peers into the mystery denoted by the word ' eternity '? The common way has been to think of it as an unending prolongation of time, both into the past and into the future. Yet there has always been another definition, dear to the hearts of the deeper thinkers.[2] Under it ' eternity ' is not ' everlastingness ' but something that ' transcends ' time, a quality wherein such words as ' present,' ' past,' and ' future ' have no meaning. A philosopher may quote Kant, and insist that we can have no knowledge of such a quality, and it is true that we can have no adequate knowledge. Yet somehow men always beat against the bars of the ' categories ' that limit their minds. They know that there is a beyond. And the old application of the saying in Ecclesiastes recurs, however mistaken it may be as exegesis, ' Thou hast hid eternity in their heart.' In the phenomenon of memory and anticipation, there is a first hint of something that ' transcends ' time. What is this ' I ' that treats itself as above the sequence

[1] If psychology finally accepts the theory, frequently referred to elsewhere, that every true society has its own reality, as distinct from the reality of its units, and that its reality may fitly be called ' spirit,' then another helpful analogy may be drawn. For the ' spirit ' of a society would be ' immanent ' in its members, and yet it would ' transcend ' each one of them or any group of them.

[2] See, for instance, Von Hügel's *Eternal Life.*

of succession? It is something that is beginning to be a person, and it gives a hint of what is true about Him who alone is perfectly personal. He is 'eternal,' and the best faint suggestion of what is meant comes, not from the scrutiny of the age of stars, but from a search into what we know of personality.

There are two other 'attributes' of God, as usually catalogued and as named above. One is 'omniscience.' There is no need to show that the best way to search into the beginnings of what is meant by this term is by a study of the human mind. But it may again be suggested that as the mind of man transcends what there is of 'mind' in animals, so the mind of God transcends that of man, or rather, much more so.[1] The other attribute is 'infinity.' Yet this is not really a distinct attribute, but a name for the way in which God on all sides of His nature—in love, holiness, knowledge, immanence, and so on—surpasses man. Man is finite, God infinite; this is the contrast that underlies the whole discussion. It is only necessary to take heed that the word 'infinity' be not itself conceived under merely spatial analogies. The world of the lily does not so much 'transcend' the world of the stone, nor the world of the lark that of the lily, nor the world of man that of the lark, as the world of the divine 'transcends' that of the human. One word may be added. The discussion of the meaning of the old series of 'attributes' shows once again the importance of relating the different qualities in any one's character properly to each other. The old theology enlarged upon such qualities as 'omnipotence,' but

[1] Cf. pp. 105 ff.

passed quickly by such qualities as 'love.' For the Christian concept of God the latter is 'architectonic,' the former ancillary. This is so because for the Christian God is a person, and a person of a given sort—a Father. And he learns thus of God because he 'knows Jesus Christ.'

XIV

'BUT WHOM SAY *YE*?'

It is not possible to hold fellowship with any one without reaching some convictions about him. And the longer and closer the fellowship, the clearer and more certain the convictions. In accordance with this law, the Christian, holding fellowship with Christ, reached and reaches certain conclusions about Christ. If it be asked whether these conclusions are 'matter of faith' or 'matter of proof,' the answer is that they are both. To understand how this can be, the nature of all human fellowship need only be once more examined. In the beginnings of friendship, for instance, a man largely takes his friend 'on trust.' He has some slight knowledge of his character, and this slight knowledge excites the desire to know him better. If this desire be reciprocated, the two begin to be friends. But friendship means mutual trust. Their fellowship therefore begins partly in knowledge and partly in trust, or faith. As the friendship ripens, each comes to know the other better, and, as he knows him better, to trust him more. Again, as he trusts him yet more, he comes to know him yet better. So, in fellowship 'faith' and 'proof' are the right and left feet of progress. It is true that the 'proof' is rather the 'proof' of life than of logic, but it is none the less

proof. Through friendship and through any other kind of fellowship, a man reaches certain conclusions about the other party to the fellowship, and, to vary the metaphor, trust and knowledge, faith and proof, are the two pillars that hold the arch. To this rule the Christian's fellowship with Christ is no exception; rather, it is a signal instance.

The conclusions that the New Testament believer gradually drew about Christ from his fellowship with Him may be summed under four assertions. First, he held that Jesus Christ was everything that man ought to be. It is probably better at this point to write 'man' than 'a man,' for the conviction included the idea that Jesus Christ is the ideal for every man. He did not appear just to be 'the ideal carpenter,' or 'the ideal Rabbi,' or 'the ideal Jew,' but 'the ideal man.' He was in the realm of history what the Platonic 'ideal man' was in the realm of thought. Students of philosophy can and do ask hard questions here, as 'How can a "particular" be a "universal"?' But hard questions can be asked about any deep experience. The fact that they cannot be fully answered does not invalidate the experience. The believer found Jesus to be 'the ideal man.' Here is another of the places where the interdependence of the 'historic Jesus' and 'the risen Christ' is clear. For the early believer could not so have thought of the unseen Christ, with whom he had fellowship day by day, unless the 'historic Jesus' had lived the life of which the Gospels tell.

The first believers drew a second conclusion from their fellowship with Christ—that He holds a unique

relation to the whole human race. One of the New Testament writers expressed this on one occasion by calling Christ 'the second Adam'; another named Him 'Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek'; while the earliest narrators of His life on earth told that He used to call Himself 'the Son of Man.'[1] It is possible to-day to trace the origin of these phrases, and of others like them, in the literature and speech of New Testament times. It is possible also to ask difficult questions both about the phrases and their interpretation.[2] Some of these questions the New Testament writers do not solve or even name. Yet, spite all this, the first believers knew that Jesus Christ was not merely the Saviour of a series of individual men, but the head of a new human society, and of a new society that ought to include, and must continually seek to include, all mankind. There were the beginnings of this society in the Church. It was to reach its perfection in the Kingdom of God. However imperfectly or even vaguely the early Christian conceived what is now called the 'solidarity of mankind,' he had such a concept, and he found himself bringing Christ into a given relation to it. It is, of course, quite normal that, as one man learns to know a second through fellowship, h should both discover what that second *is* to other men, and reach a conviction as to what that second *ought to be* to other men. A subaltern

[1] The title 'the Christ' itself, when first used of Jesus (Mark viii. 29), meant that He was to be head of the Jewish race; later its content widened to include mankind. Throughout it is a 'societary' term.

[2] The writer is one of those who hold that, whatever the origin and usual meaning of the phrase 'Son of Man,' an examination of *Jesus*' use of it requires that He claimed by it the unique relation to mankind that is described above.

in the Army, through fellowship with his captain, may learn how much the captain is to his Company, and may reach the conclusion that he ought to be commander-in-chief of the whole Army. This analogy too is, of course, incomplete, yet it may give a hint of the way in which the first believer came to see what Christ was to the Christian Church, and what He ought to be to all men. From this other beliers followed, but for the moment these may be left. The New Testament clearly reaches the conviction that Christ is and ought to be the Head of a new mankind.

But by fellowship with Christ the disciple learnt a third truth, this time about both Christ and God. The 'man of religion' always and everywhere is a man who knows something about God and wants to know more. He has, and has had, many teachers, who teach both by what they say and what they are. But he exhausts them all in turn, except One. The most devout Buddhist looks for another and better Buddha; the fanatical Muhammedan expects a Mahdi who will surpass the earlier Prophet; even the Jew looks for a Messiah who will 'fulfil' the Old Testament, and, fulfilling, pass beyond it. But the Christian, from the first, has always believed that in Jesus Christ there is the final and sufficient revelation of God. This does not mean that Christ leaves no unsolved mysteries in the concept of the divine nature, but it does mean that He has told men all that they need to know about God in order that they may live and live 'abundantly.' Again, while it does not mean that the Christian has no more to learn about God, it does mean that what he has still to learn will be learnt through Christ, and

not through any other. In one way this conviction is impossible of proof, and it is true that in it the element of faith is peculiarly obvious. Yet the Christian has the same kind of ground for his belief about Christ in the future that other men have for other beliefs about the future. To return, he believes that what Christ is, teaches finally what God is. There is here again small need to gather evidence from the New Testament. It has often been collected. A few phrases that sum the belief may be quoted. Two of the more 'philosophical' New Testament writers use metaphors. John, recalling that persons mirror their characters in their speech, calls Jesus 'the Word' of God; the writer to the Hebrews says that He is to God as the ray to the sun or the stamp to the die.[1] Paul's characteristic phrase is here simpler: 'The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' The Synoptic writers are content with the name 'The Son of God.' The implications of such phrases need not be discussed just here. It is clear that the men who used them believed that, knowing what Christ was, they knew what God was, and knew this in an unequalled and unsurpassable way.

Yet this is not all. To go back a little—through fellowship with one person a man may pass into fellowship with another. Through a single friend he may win many more. It is conceivable that men might in this way, through fellowship with Christ, enter into fellowship with God. At least at first, this is what Jesus' disciples felt they were doing. He 'knew the Father,' and therefore He was the one to 'teach [them]

[1] John i. 1, 14; Heb. i. 3.

to pray,' and prayer is fellowship with God. But gradually the disciple came to see that his experience meant more than this. He found that his fellowship with Christ was itself none other than fellowship with God. It was not enough to say—to borrow again the phraseology of the book that best sums the findings of the first believers—that Christ is 'the way' to the 'Father'; it was true that 'he that has seen [Christ] has seen the Father'; that '[Christ] and the Father are one.' Even if the discourses of the Fourth Gospel do not belong word for word to the Master Himself, at least they reflect the thought of a thinker in the early Church, and of a thinker whose account of Christ was accepted as accurate by his fellow-Christians. The first believers found that to know Christ was to know God. There is no need to gather here the New Testament evidence for the divinity of Christ. It is well known that only in the Fourth Gospel is He indubitably called God outright. In the earlier books there are many phrases that gradually approximate to this assertion. It is not wonderful that the Christian Jew, in particular, with his staunch monotheism, only gradually reached the assertion, for it is still impossible fully to solve the 'mystery' that it raises for the monotheist. Slowly, however, the first believers found themselves creeping towards it, urged on by a necessity that they could not control. The study of Jesus' life and their daily fellowship with Christ both drove them to one conclusion. We have here to do with the latter. A single instance of its working may be taken. A Jewish Christian, in a phrase famous through Ritschlian use to-day, declared that 'God was in

Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.' 'Reconciliation,' of course, means the renewal of fellowship. What was Paul's ground for so great a claim? Undoubtedly his own experience of Christ. 'In Christ' he himself had found God. Who then was Christ? The question could not always remain unanswered. The doctrine of the divinity of Christ, as has often been said, is required rather than stated in much of the New Testament. It was required before it was understood. Other statements about His nature preceded it. But at length the one satisfactory explanation was given: 'The Word was God.'[1] How satisfactory it at once proved, even to rigid monotheists, appears from the nature of the first heresy, Docetism. This arose so soon that its beginnings may be traced in the New Testament itself.[2] It was a first attempt to solve the problem how a single person can be both God and man. And it proceeded, not by mitigating the claim that Christ was divine, but by suggesting that He was not really man! His human life was not more distant than the life of Wellington is to-day, yet the Christian found it easier to deny His humanity than His divinity. The latter seemed the more certain to the believer because of his living experience of the living Christ. The early Christian discovered four things about Christ through his fellowship with Him, and the fourth was that Christ was God.

The four assertions—that Christ is Man, Son of Man,

[1] Another way of showing this is to trace the gradual deepening of the word 'Lord' as used of Jesus. This is done above (chapter x.), in the first part of the book, because the writer thinks that the belief was matter of experience even before any one saw clearly that it was so. Cf. pp. 133 f.

[2] e.g. 1 John iv. 2 f.

Son of God, God—ensue from the study of New Testament experience. Yet this does not cease here to be 'normal' for later Christians. It would be difficult to enumerate, and impossible to solve, all the problems that arise from the four assertions. They have been raised again and again in Christian history, and many attempts have been made to solve them. Christians still differ about the best way to treat them. Some have seemed more difficult to one age, others to another. Various philosophies have ruled in the realm of thought and called these 'dogmas' to account. But, in spite of all the difficulties—indeed, even when bewildered with the difficulties—the Christian 'witness' has remained the same. Men have gone on knowing Christ. They have entered into His fellowship. As they have done so, they have made the old, new discoveries about Him. The Christian to-day still says: He is Man; He is 'Son of Man'; who knows Him knows God; He is God.

A word of retrospect may here be allowed, in order to bring out in another way the truth that the divinity of Christ is involved in the Christian experience. In each of the chapters in the first part of the book, the New Testament account of that experience was examined in some one of its aspects, and in the process an attempt was made to put it into modern speech, and to compare it with the experience of Christians to-day. It cannot have escaped the reader's notice that again and again the examination led to a given point. This was not 'done purposely' by the writer. His attempt to set out the Christian experience led 'naturally' in this direction. At the end of the

discussion of ' faith ' it was found that the Christian yields to Christ that utter faith which is only proper to God ; the chapter on ' Grace ' led to the conclusion that the relation of Christ to Christians is like that of God ; again, it was seen that in the death of Christ God forgives [1] ; ' justification ' was found to mean a new relation to God, and ' regeneration ' a renewal of the lost sonship of God ; ' the Spirit ' may be called indistinguishably the ' Spirit of Christ ' or ' the Spirit of God ' ; to be ' perfect ' is to be like Christ, or like God ; ' eternal life ' may be defined either as ' life in Christ ' or ' life in God ' ; the ' Lordship of Jesus ' has only one parallel, the Lordship of God. The implication that Christ is divine may be debated in one or more of these instances. There are those who hardily deny that it is implied in the whole of them taken together. The Christian thinks not so. For him they have a cumulative effect and lead to a single assertion —an assertion that does not depend chiefly upon theoretical argument but grows out of experience— an assertion, again, that does not wait upon the exegesis of some few ' proof texts ' but is the inevitable implicate of the experience of many generations of Christians —the assertion that Christ is God.

[1] See also pp. 144 f.

XV

THE ATONEMENT

EVERY form of fellowship presupposes that those who share it have something in common. The members of a musical society may belong to different ' social grades,' or to various political parties, or to different races, but they share a fairly vigorous love of music. Even here they may vary, one preferring Beethoven to Chopin, another giving German music pre-eminence over Italian, and so on, yet, however difficult it may be to define that which they ' have in common,' they must have ' something in common,' ' something ' of a musical kind, or there could be no fellowship between them at all.

Further, the purpose of all fellowship, more or less consciously, is both to enjoy and to feed that which is common to those who share it. Two lovers wander together down a green lane that they may enjoy their distinctive kind of fellowship and that it may grow. It may be true in exceptional instances that ' absence makes the heart grow fonder,' but, as a rule, fellowship that is not ' kept in repair ' dwindles and dies. The maxim, ' Out of sight, out of mind,' is often true. There are, indeed, other ways of maintaining and feeding fellowship besides intercourse ' face to face '—writing letters, for instance—but, unless fellowship in

some way ' function,' it perishes. On the other hand, if it ' function ' regularly, it strengthens and deepens. Here pre-eminently the way of life is to live. Fellowship feeds on itself.

But, while those who hold fellowship with one another must have ' something in common,' they rarely or never have everything in common. As just seen, the members of a musical society probably do not share a common political creed. What does fellowship mean for that which is outside it? What is the relation of a society to the part of its members' life that lies outside its purposes? Two attitudes may be distinguished—indifference and antagonism. A musical society is ' indifferent ' to politics but intolerant of noise. In other words, it tolerates differences that do not ' matter ' to its purposes, but not those that conflict with them. As its purposes are limited, the range of its indifference is large and of its antagonism small. In the wider and closer fellowship of home, on the contrary, the range of indifference is small, and that of antagonism large. If, for example, a particular home is ' happy ' in spite of serious differences between husband and wife on such subjects as religion or the education of children, people speak of the instance as ' remarkable.' They are surprised that so close a fellowship can admit disagreement on such issues. And in general the closer and more intimate fellowships tend to treat comparatively little as indifferent, and to demand that those who share them shall share purposes that cover the whole of life. Even in other instances the range of the ' indifferent ' is often smaller than usually appears. Probably, for instance, there

were English musical societies which during the War would not have retained a ' pro-German ' in membership. ' Subconsciously ' some degree of political agreement had been all the while assumed. This, of course, only illustrates the fact that human nature cannot really be cut up into ' watertight compartments.' The important truths here, however, are that every fellowship is intolerant of that which contradicts its purpose, and that in the greater forms of fellowship the purpose tends to be as wide as life.[1]

What is the range of the Christian's fellowship with Christ? What purposes have the two in common? To what is the fellowship indifferent? To what is it antagonistic?

It is true of many kinds of fellowship that some who share them are not, especially at first, fully aware of their implications. Not infrequently an educated man has married an uneducated woman, both agreeing that this difference ' does not matter,' only bitterly to find later that it does. Or how often have a Protestant and a Roman Christian been friends, with a tacit understanding that ' religion is taboo,' only to find at last that one has been ' influencing ' the other's faith all the time? It is quite a common phenomenon that a given form of fellowship may have wider scope than those who enjoy it think. This has often been so with the Christian's fellowship with Christ. The common distinction between the ' religious ' and ' secular ' in life shows this, or the nineteenth-century

[1] This unity of purpose is, of course, compatible with diverse ways of serving the one purpose, and even with difference of opinion as to the best way to serve it on varying occasions. Otherwise fellowship would cease to be a difference within unity,—that is, would cease to be itself.

saying, 'I do not mix religion with business.' As if Christ could admit anything to be secular or could be indifferent to 'business'! But, while this is so in many instances of the fellowship, it is never so when the fellowship is intense. It is never so in the typical instances. What would Paul or Luther or Wesley have said to the suggestion that there was a part of their life to which Christ was 'indifferent,' and in which His 'influence' did not intrude? And indeed it is agreed to-day that Jesus 'counts nothing human alien' to Himself, that His purpose in His fellowship with men is as wide as human life, that He is 'Son of Man.' Nothing, therefore, is indifferent to this fellowship.

Is anything antagonistic to it? Is there anything that it 'cannot away with'? The answer follows from two Christian assertions about Jesus—that He is perfect man, 'all that man ought to be,' and that He is sinless. It may be asked, 'Well, but what do you mean by sin?' Some further discussion of this question will be taken later, but here it is enough to repeat what has already been said—that by sin is meant anything that contradicts the will of God, or that interrupts man's fellowship with Him.[1] Jesus was sinless in that He always 'pleased God.' And therein He was fully human. For sin, however universal it may be among men, is inhuman. If it is universal, it is a universal disease. If it were held that it is proper to human nature, it would follow that Jesus was not fully man. It would also follow that, if He and Christians are to enjoy a fellowship that is as wide as human life, He must forgo sinlessness. The

[1] p. 46.

endeavour to escape from sin by the help of Christ is one definition of 'faith,' the endeavour of Christ to help men to escape from sin one account of 'grace.' The Christian's fellowship with Christ cannot but be antagonistic to sin. It must either kill it or be killed by it.

Another of the phenomena of fellowship follows easily. If a fellowship seeks to include much or the whole of life, and it is to strengthen or even continue, there must be a common attempt to abolish antagonisms. This may be done, again, in either of two ways—the lower of the two who share the fellowship may rise to the level of the higher, or the higher sink to the lower. There are examples of both methods in *Westward Ho!* When Amyas Leigh finds that two of his sailors have wedded Indian brides and sunk to the level of savage life, he is 'tempted of the devil' to wed Ayacanora and descend the same slope. Later, Ayacanora follows him to Devon in hope to climb upward to his civilized level. There is no need to say to which class the fellowship of Christ with the Christian belongs. It seeks to make sinful man sinless. 'On account of [Christ's] infinite love,' said Irenaeus, 'He became what we are, in order that He might make us what He Himself is.' 'Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for it is He that shall save His people from their sins.'

Here falls yet another of the phenomena of fellowship. It takes the form of a paradox. If by fellowship a noble man is to lift an ignoble, a wise man to teach an ignorant, a better to 'save' a worse, he must at one and the same time become like him and remain

different from him. The logician cannot explain this, but the psychologist knows it to be true. There is a ready illustration in the realm of teaching. Jesus Himself said, 'Learn of Me, for I am meek.' Every true teacher must 'put himself in the place' of the pupil. He must start with him, walk step by step with him, and so at last teach him everything that he himself knows. But, while this 'meekness' is the temper of a true teacher, he must also all the while remain different from his pupil, else he would not know what the next step should be! A missionary once went to China, and, as every missionary must, he set himself, as nearly as might be, to 'put himself inside the Chinaman's skin.' But he went too far with his self-identification, for he began to smoke opium. And he ended by sinking to the level of those he 'came to save,' a sot in an opium 'den.' On the other hand, there was once a Christian woman who set herself to 'save' some of the outcast women of London. She went to live in a slum, hired a small room, kept 'open house' for the women of her search, 'made friends' with those of them who were willing to be her friends. In short, she entered into fellowship with harlots. But while she became so fully one with them that many of them trusted her as they trusted none else, and some through her forsook their evil life, yet she could only so succeed by remaining different all the while.[1] This

[1] The story of Loyola and the adulterer teaches, at heart, the same truth. 'It came to [Loyola's] knowledge that an unhappy man, probably a Spaniard, was engaged in an illicit amour with a married woman. . . . Ascertaining that, on his way to visit the object of his guilty passion, he had to cross a bridge over the Lake of Gentilly, Ignatius repaired to the spot. . . and, taking off his clothes, stationed himself in the water up to the neck. . . . It was winter, and the water icy cold; and the Saint passed the time praying to God with tears to have mercy on this madman, who

is the constant paradox of 'salvation.' It comes by a fellowship that combines likeness with difference, difference with likeness. The Christ gives the culminating instance. In a famous passage Paul tells how He made Himself one with man. 'Counting it no prize to be on an equality with God, He emptied Himself . . . becoming in the likeness of men.' Christians call this the mystery of the Incarnation. But Paul adds another humiliation. He was not yet enough like sinful men to 'save' them. 'Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.'[1] To the Incarnation He added the Atonement. How was He more like sinful men on the cross than ever before? In another passage Paul gives an answer: 'Him who knew no sin [God] made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.'[2] It is perhaps a bolder phrase than any Christian writer since has dared to use. But the right paradox is there—'knew no sin . . . made to be sin.' How did the Cross carry likeness-within-difference further than the manger carried it? A passage from the Gospel account of Calvary gives the answer, 'Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?"' The

had no mercy on his own soul. . . . The adulterer neared the bridge, when he was startled by a voice from the water which was vehement in its earnestness. "Go," it said, "and enjoy your odious pleasures at the peril of your life and of your immortal soul. I, meanwhile, will do penance for your sin. Here you will find me when you return; and here every evening, till God, whom I shall never cease imploring, shall bring your crimes, or my life, to an end." At these words, and still more at the sight, he beheld the man stand abashed and confounded. . . . He abandoned his guilty purpose, and changed his whole course of life.' (Quoted from Stewart Rose's 'Ignatius Loyola and the Early Jesuits,' by Dean Church, *Occasional Papers*, vol. i. pp. 250 f.) Reference may also be made to the context of the passages from Shelley and Mark Rutherford quoted on p. 29.

[1] Phil. ii. 5-8. [2] 2 Cor. v. 21.

utmost issue of sin is separation from God. This is the core of hell. To save men from sin, Jesus, Himself still sinless, 'tasted' the uttermost consequence of sin. It was not from physical pangs that He shrank in Gethsemane, but from a spiritual horror. Christian theology will say that this is to add paradox to paradox, for He could not 'save' men 'unto God' if He Himself were separate from God. Besides, the last by itself is just incredible. And did He not say presently, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit'? But we need not be chary of paradox when we try to scrutinize the deepest of all mysteries, wherein the three greatest mysteries of all blend in one, the mystery of the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of sin. It is only possible to save any one from any spiritual—or if the term be preferred, psychical—ill, if the would-be saviour at one and the same time goes down in fellowship to the level of the one whom he seeks to save, and yet does not go down. This law finds its climax in the Cross. Christian experience is right in making the Crucifixion, and not the Incarnation, the crisis of 'salvation.' By the Incarnation a sinless mankind might indeed have entered into fellowship with God, but only by the Cross can a sinful mankind escape from sin and do so. Primarily 'salvation from sin' is a problem of fellowship, the fellowship of man with God. The very word 'atonement,' taken literally, requires this. In the above paragraph many other Christian doctrines are of course involved, but it has only one aim—to show that the Christian doctrine of salvation is true to the findings of psychological study. In the realm of persons there

is only one way by which a nobler can lift a meaner man, a better 'save' a worse—he must seek and win his fellowship in such a way as at once to become like him and remain different from him. He must pass through his comrade's experience—often feeling it more poignantly than he—in order that in turn his comrade may share his experience. Salvation is by mutual experience. This may not be true to logic, but it is true to life.

In passing it may be noted that, while fellowship seeks to expel everything that is alien to its purpose, it does not always, or even usually, succeed at a leap. Its success may come by degrees, and it is patient of that kind of success. But the subject of the progressive nature of Christian salvation has already been treated.[1] Another remark is more important here. Salvation by fellowship always needs the consent of both parties. This is only a particular example of the mutual freedom that is a mark of all high fellowship.[2] Yet hereupon another paradox swims into view! It is credible that in a series of generations a low African tribe might of itself achieve European culture, but it is certain that a single member of the tribe could never attain it of himself. Yet, if he consent to learn from some patient European teacher, he may acquire it. There have been such instances. But his consent is essential. To revert to the religious term, he must exercise 'faith' in his teacher, and exercise it regularly and actively, or the teacher cannot serve him. Or again, while Helen Keller could do nothing 'of herself' to escape

[1] See the chapter on 'The Saint and the Perfect,' and pp. 150, 260 f.
[2] Cf. pp. 191 ff., where a necessary qualification is added.

from the dire consequences of her sterile senses, her 'saviour' had to begin by winning her complete trust. Much more is it impossible that a sinner 'save himself' from sin, yet Christ cannot save him unless he trust. So that 'the whole work' is Christ's, yet the sinner does something! Wesley included a work by an eminent Calvinist in his 'Christian Library,' but, in his own copy, at a point where the writer declares that there is nothing for the Christian to do, Wesley has a marginal manuscript note: 'No, repent, believe.' The Prodigal can do nothing for himself, except respond to the spirit of home when it whispers 'Come.' His father does not force him home, for he knows that an unwilling son, even if he be in the house, is not 'of the home.' He may have been one with his home in the days of infancy without his consent, for his personality was then too undeveloped for freedom to operate fully, but he cannot be one with home in that way now. Salvation is by fellowship, and there can be no fellowship between the free except by mutual choice.

It will have been noticed that here too it has been found impossible to discuss fellowship with Christ without introducing the question of the relation of men to God. Sin has been defined as the contradiction of the will of God. There can be no doubt that, historically, this is both the Scriptural and the Christian connotation of the term. A man's relation to Christ, therefore, seems to be regulative of his relation to God. The appropriate word here is 'forgiveness.' It is the constant claim of those whose fellowship with Christ is close and active, that they do know that God has

forgiven their sins. This is a chief source of their joy. Is there any connexion psychologically between fellowship and forgiveness? The answer will depend upon the definition of 'forgiveness.' If it mean the mere remission of a legal penalty, then the answer is 'No.' If it mean the renewal of intimacy, then of course the answer is 'Yes.' The instance of home is again a good illustration. If a son 'sin' against his home, the worst result is alienation of spirit. So long as he 'continues in sin,' it is impossible that he should share the fellowship of home. He may live in the same house as his father, but there is between them an unbridged gulf. But, if he repent and his father forgive him, the renewal of the old fellowship of home at once ensues, for, unless he is welcomed back into fellowship, 'forgiveness' is only a name. The 'best robe' and the 'fatted calf' were not 'forgiveness' to the Prodigal. They were only its symbols. To return to the immediate subject, it is another of the phenomena of the Christian experience that, when a man enters into fellowship with Christ, he is conscious of a new relation to God. He 'knows his sins forgiven.' He and his Father are one.

It has just been implied that on the sinner's side there must be repentance, and that true repentance is the beginning of a 'change of heart.' Sometimes repentance has been described as necessary before there can be 'forgiveness.' This may be so 'in thought,' but in fact are they not rather simultaneous? Or again, repentance has been treated as antecedent to fellowship with Christ. This may be so logically, but is it always so experimentally? It was *after* some

initial experience of fellowship with Jesus that Peter cried, ' Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.' In general, the desire for the fellowship of Christ and repentance for sin are but the positive and negative sides of the same experience, and to desire fellowship with Christ is to begin to have it. As soon as the Prodigal said, ' I will arise and go to my father,' his heart was at home.

A comment may be intruded here. Jesus was far too wise a teacher to try to say everything at once. Even in His greatest parable He only sought to tell half the truth. He said nothing of the sorrow of the Prodigal's father in the days while his son was away, nothing of the cost of the love that flung its arms around the swine-smelling sot, nothing of the frequent pang of the further days as the renewed fellowship surprised this or that foul or insensitive place in character. Yet Jesus knew everything about these things. He spelt them out in Gethsemane and Calvary. But in the days before these befell, He practised the reticence of fine souls about their own sorrows. His parable tells the tale of reconciliation from the side of the son, or rather, the sons. And it expounds salvation by fellowship, which is ' salvation by faith.'

The fashion of classifying all theories of the Atonement as either ' subjective ' or ' objective ' is happily passing away, but it may be noticed that, if the subject is approached from the side of fellowship, an answer is suggested to the question, ' Does the death of Christ " make any difference " to God ? ' At least this is so if the postulate of the above discussion be allowed—that it is misleading, here as elsewhere,

merely to set the Son over against the Father ; or, to put the same truth positively, that in the Cross we see the suffering of God Himself ; or, if a Biblical phrase be preferred, that, in Christ's death as in His life, ' God was in [Him], reconciling the world unto Himself.' If this postulate is granted, Jesus' great parable may again help us. Did it ' make any difference ' to the father when his younger son went into the ' far country ' ? He loved him as much as ever, but now the same love could not express itself. He could not be to his son what a father ought to be. This is not altogether the same as that other sad difference, that his heart was broken. Again, did it ' make any difference ' to the father when the lad returned ? Once again, his love remained the same, but now it had free course, now it began again to be perfected in fellowship, for sorrow it was joy. Fellowship is mutual ; love is mutual ; if they be refused on one side, it does ' make a difference ' indeed on the other. When a lad is astray, his father cannot be to him all that a father ought to be, for *he* prevents it. When he comes home, choosing now to be what a son ought to be, it makes the difference that his father can now be all that a father ought and longs to be. In fellowship there is no such thing as merely one-sided change.

XVI

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD

In the chapter on 'The Spirit of Christ' it was found that the New Testament, when it speaks of the Christian experience after Pentecost, thinks of the Christian as being in fellowship with someone whom it calls indifferently 'Christ,' 'The Spirit of Christ,' 'The Spirit,' 'The Spirit of God.'[1] In the same chapter it was noted that the alternation of the first and second of these names, along with other evidence, implies that, at least sometimes, the Spirit was identified with the Risen Christ. It may now be added that the Spirit is God. There is, indeed, no text that explicitly states this—for the well-known Johannine phrase, 'God is Spirit,'[2] means only that God is a spiritual being—but it is continually implied both in the Old and New Testaments. There is no need again to adduce the familiar proofs. In the Bible the Spirit is God at work in the world of men. Even the Unitarian admits so much, for, if the Spirit be reduced to 'the influence of God,' this still means that in the Spirit's activity God is active. The two statements, 'The Spirit is the Risen Christ' and 'The Spirit is God,' obviously raise questions about the nature of God. These, however, are left to the next chapter.

[1] p. 74. [2] John iv. 24.

In this, some of the implications of the claim that 'the Spirit is God at work,' or 'The Spirit is God considered as immanent,' are examined and related to other Christian truths. On this definition the Spirit is better called 'He' than 'it,' for God immanent is still personal. Here again the phenomena lie close to the phenomena of fellowship and interweave with them.

The starting-point of New Testament thought on this subject is that every Christian, as such, has the Spirit. This is the burden of the story of Pentecost and of many another familiar passage. One may be quoted: 'If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.'[1] The Christian was thought of as a man who had received the Spirit, and who knew that he had received Him. The New Testament story of Christianity is the story of the men of the Spirit.

It is obvious that we are now back at the concept of fellowship, that he who 'has the Spirit of God' is the man who is in fellowship with God. What part does the Spirit play in this fellowship?

When fellowship is perfect, then there is complete harmony of will between those who share it. In the case in point, this means that the will of the Christian is in complete harmony with the will of God. This idea is expressed in the New Testament by the phrase 'filled with the Spirit.' What is meant by being 'filled with' the Spirit—in what sense it implies perfection, and yet admits growth—may be seen by referring to the chapter on 'The "Saint" and the "Perfect."' Another question, however, arises: when a Christian is not 'filled with' the Spirit, does

[1] Rom. viii. 9.

his fellowship with God lapse? Has the Spirit nothing to do with him? Does he cease to be a Christian? Here once more the analogy of human fellowship, of the fellowship of man with man, suggests the answer. A fellowship may be real even when it is imperfect, even when the harmony of will with will is incomplete. Such disharmony indeed impairs and endangers the fellowship, and if it persists still more, if the degree of disharmony grows—the fellowship may lapse. On the other hand, the degree of disharmony may diminish until it disappears, as in a 'growing' friendship. These things are all true of the fellowship of a Christian with 'the Spirit.' When there is any degree of disharmony, the Spirit is not idle or careless. The most famous passage in the whole New Testament about the fellowship of the Spirit with the Christian,[1] the passage that tells triumphantly of His emancipating power, tells also that He turns to face God, as it were, in behalf of those who have His 'first-fruits'—'The Spirit maketh intercession for us with unutterable groans.' The phrase is a strange one; its best commentary is the story of the struggle of the human soul against sin in the preceding chapter. The Spirit on the one hand 'bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God'; on the other hand, He 'groans' as He struggles to bring the imperfect Christian into complete fellowship with God.

The collectors of texts add here the verses that speak of 'quenching' and 'grieving' the Spirit. And so, remembering that the Spirit is God, we reach the concept of a 'struggling God.' Some have supposed

[1] Rom. viii.

it to be a new thing in the earth! Yet it is in the New Testament all the time. So too, we reach the idea that God feels and suffers. The 'old theology,' even when it used the term 'Father' of God, argued that He must be 'blessed for evermore,' and that therefore, though He might love or be angry, He could not be sorry or suffer. This argument is not without strength, for it seems clear that bliss, or supreme happiness, is an element in perfection. Yet to-day men say that they have no use for an impassive God, and that it is inevitable that a true 'Father' should suffer in sympathy with His children. Here too the best refuge is an antinomy. It is necessary to claim that God is both blessed and broken-hearted, that He is both happy and sad. Many a human heart has been both at once. The New Testament speaks of the Father's love, of the Son's suffering because He loves, and of the Spirit's being 'grieved'—again, by sure implication, because He loves. There is no 'impassibility' in God.

But other questions follow. While the glad creed 'We have the Spirit of Christ' is the 'sure and certain' Alpha of the Christian doctrine of the Spirit, it cannot be its Omega. Had the Spirit nothing to do with the Christian before he became a Christian? Has He nothing to do with men who are not Christians? Had he nothing to do with the Old Testament 'saints'?[1] Has He nothing to do with those who seek after God among the 'heathen'? Were Confucius and the Buddha quite without Him? Has He nothing to do, even, with those who do not 'seek after God' at all,

[1] Cf. 1 Peter i. 11.

whether in heathendom or Christendom? All these are questions about fellowship.

There is only one answer. It, too, does not depend for its truth upon the quotation of a few scattered texts, but is the inevitable implication of the Christian experience of Christ. It has been seen above that Jesus was perfect man, and that He called every other man to be perfect. How? There is only one way—by the indwelling of the Spirit of the perfect man. This carries a high doctrine of human nature, as will appear in a subsequent chapter. But, as the 'Spirit of Jesus' is the 'Spirit of God,' it also carries the doctrine that the Spirit of God is meant for every man, and that He seeks to be the constant 'fellow' of every man. This is implied obscurely in the Old Testament accounts of God's Spirit and man's nature; New Testament doctrine would be chaotic without it. Luke tells us that at Pentecost Peter quoted an old prophecy of Joel's: 'I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh.' Joel himself was probably thinking, not of a universally inspired mankind, but of a universally inspired Israel, and even Peter at Pentecost may not yet have fully appreciated the inherent scope of the prophecy, but there is no doubt that Luke interpreted it universally. For was not Luke a follower of Paul? And was not Paul the 'Apostle of the Gentiles'? Such passages, again, as the eighth of Romans and the fourth of Ephesians 'take it for granted' that every man's nature is capable of the Holy Spirit, that every man was made for the fellowship of God, and that by His Spirit He is ever seeking every man's fellowship. The latter part of a Johannine passage, to which

reference has already been made, sums this truth for the whole New Testament: 'God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth, *for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.*'[1] A Synoptic passage puts the quest from the other side: 'Shall not your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit *to them that ask Him*?'[2] Every human being is made for fellowship with God. God's Spirit, in His own gentle and patient strength, seeks the fellowship of every man that is born into the world.

A word may be inserted here about 'Conscience.' Once this was treated as if it were a separate 'faculty' in human personality, but modern psychology shows that personality is not a bundle of 'faculties,' but a whole, and that in 'conscience' a person passes moral judgements upon himself. But this is not all. In the old doctrine of 'conscience' two things were 'lumped together.' In man there is another who 'judges' and 'strives' and 'appeals.' His name is the Holy Spirit. When he cannot 'bear witness' with a man's 'spirit that he is a child of God,' He 'bears witness' of the opposite with that man's 'spirit.' He lets no man alone. The 'conscience' of man really has two moments; the Pauline names for them are 'the Spirit Himself,' and 'our own spirit.'[3] The Spirit of God 'visits' every man.

If it be asked for what purpose He comes, the first part of the answer appears from the adjective that so often accompanies the term 'Spirit.' He comes to make man 'holy.' For Christianity the 'architectonic'

[1] John iv. 24. [2] Luke xi. 13.
[3] It is because of the second that conscience may err or deaden.

thing in human life is religious and ethical, and the Spirit begins His work in that realm. But does He stop there? Has he nothing to do with the rest of human life? Usually three ideal purposes are distinguished for man—Goodness, Truth, Beauty. The second term denotes the pursuit of knowledge, both in science and philosophy; the third names the pursuit of art. The three together take in the whole 'personality' of man, on its three sides of volition, cognition, and emotion. Science, philosophy, art—are not all these, as well as religion, 'proper' to man? Yet in seeking to perfect himself in any one of them is he not seeking something that finds its ultimate perfection in the nature of God? Are they not all then parts of man's fellowship with God? And, if the Holy Spirit is 'proper' to human nature, does He not aid men in all these pursuits, and not only in the pursuit of holiness? The Biblical answer to these questions may again be given in either of two ways. A few scattered texts may be quoted, beginning from the Old Testament passage where Bezalel and Oholiab, the famous artists of the Tabernacle, are said to have been 'filled with the Spirit,' and ending with the Pauline admonition 'whatsoever things are lovely . . . think on these things.'[1] But surely there is a better way. The Bible does not contain any exhaustive examination of all the implications of Christian truth. What follows if it be held that the Spirit of God is 'proper' to man? Surely that He has to do with everything in human nature, except that abortive thing, sin. The Spirit's sphere is as wide as true human life. The scattered

[1] Exod. xxxv. 30 ff.; Phil. iv. 8.

texts may rightly be quoted as hints of this, but, like an occasional outcrop of rock, they are only signs of a universal *substratum*. Neither goodness nor science, music nor manufacture, philosophy nor sport, is alien to the Spirit. This side of truth has been too much neglected, to the impoverishment of Christendom. Nothing properly human is outside the fellowship of God. Just so far as man is true man, God is immanent in him.[1]

A similar series of questions may be asked about societies. In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the bond of the unity of a particular society, the Church. There is a well-known instance in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians. A single sentence will recall its burden: 'For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit.'[2] In other words, just as the thought of the first Christians about the Spirit in relation to the individual started from the tenet that the Christian man is 'filled with' the Spirit, so their thought about the Spirit in relation to human societies started from the tenet that the Christian society is 'filled with' the Spirit. Yet here too, while this was the Alpha of Christian thought, it is not the Omega. Questions follow as surely as in the instance of the individual. What if the Christian society is imperfect, as indeed it generally has been? Has the Spirit then nothing to do with it? It was to the sorely imperfect Church at Corinth, with its serious sins and unchristian schisms, that Paul wrote the very passage just quoted.

[1] Cf. the chapter on 'Fellowship and Nature.'

[2] 1 Cor. xii. 13.

With a society, as with an individual, the thwarted Spirit does not at once refuse to hold an imperfect fellowship. Again, has He nothing to do with any human society but one? Is He the monopoly of the Church? Had He nothing to do with the nation called Israel in Old Testament times? Had He nothing to do with the Athenian people? Or with the Roman? Has He had nothing to do with the religions outside Christianity? If He 'visited' the Buddha, as suggested above, has He ignored Buddhism ever since? It is obvious that these questions are parallel to those just asked about the Holy Spirit and the individual, and that the same answers may be given to them one by one. In some degree the Spirit is 'in' every true human society—whether religious, political, artistic, scientific, industrial or other. It is to be allowed that here even scattered texts are hard to find. Perhaps the nearest are Paul's assertions that the State is 'ordained of God' and 'a minister of God,' and that in every family fatherhood has its type in God.[1] But the implication of the Christian doctrine of the fellowship of God with man seems clear. It cannot be a merely individual fellowship, for man is societary as well as individual. The Christian ideal on this side is of a universal society, informed by the Spirit of God, since He is also the Spirit of 'the Son of Man'—a society within which every smaller society that meets the needs of mankind on any worthy side will find its place. Such a universal society, knit by the Spirit of God, will be the Kingdom of God.[2]

[1] Rom. xiii. 4; Eph. iii. 15.
[2] See the writer's *Bible Doctrine of Society*, chaps. v. and vi.

Two particular questions may be noticed. First, what of evil societies? What, that is, of societies whose purpose is evil? What, for instance, of a company of thieves? Is it to be said that the Holy Spirit has anything to do with such a society? The beginning of a reply may be made by asking similar questions about an individual who is set on evil. Has the Holy Spirit anything to do with a thief? The usual answer is that even such a man has in him relics of goodness—as, for instance, the most famous of Bret Harte's tales witness—and that, in so far as there is anything good left in a thief, the Holy Spirit lays hold of that in a constant endeavour to save the man. Is it not equally possible to claim that He 'visits' evil societies, laying hold of anything good in them, and seeking through it to drive out the evil? It is only the altogether evil man and the altogether evil society, if such there be, with which the Spirit of God has nothing whatever to do. Such a man has degenerated into a devil, and such a society has become a hell.

Again, it will be asked, 'Does not this doctrine mean the abandonment of Foreign Missions? If the Holy Spirit be at work in Buddhism, why send missionaries to turn the Buddhists to Christianity?' The answer is, 'Because the Buddha was not the Son of Man.' Even if the Buddhist religion could be purged of everything in it that is sinful—and even if it were to fulfil all the promise of its first years—it would still be imperfect. For the Buddha did not answer to the whole demands of human nature. He comes short of the Christ. If it be true, indeed, that 'man is made

in the image of God,' then only the God-Man can found the perfect society. He is the Head of the true mankind, and none other can be. The meaning of this Headship will be discussed further in another chapter. It is only in the perfect society, the society that is integrate in the 'Son of Man,' that the Holy Spirit can fully manifest Himself.[1] Christians who practise what they believe will continue to send missionaries to every land, for their Lord's purpose is to fashion a perfect mankind. Both the sun and the moon give light, yet a man who could give his brothers the sun would not deny it because they had the moon.

A very speculative question may be added. The 'specialists' in the new science of sociology are busy trying to define a society. As already noted, they tend to assert that a true society has in some sense a real unity of its own—a something over and above the mere arithmetical sum of the individuals that compose it—but they cannot agree what this something is. Is it possible that the answer may come from theology, and that the 'something' is the Spirit of God? The suggestion may be left as a question, for the subject is too little explored as yet for more. It may prove at last that all true societies are but part of the one great human society, and that both it and they are integrate in the Spirit of God. Here there is at least a possible answer to the question, 'What is meant by the "reality" of societies?'

[1] Cf. p. 72, and see John vii. 39—it is only to those who by faith are one with the perfect Man that His Spirit can be fully given, and, on the other hand, He was not fully one with them until He had for them died and risen again (Cf. chapter on 'The Atonement').

An objection may be anticipated. It may be said that the bond of some societies is clearly a common blood—as in the family, or a common fatherland—as in the nation, and so on. On examination these things are not so clear. A human family is more than a bird's brood, yet both are knit by common blood. Again, a nation like the Jewish or the Parsi may live for centuries without a fatherland. It is possible to trace an evolution of societies as well as of individual living beings. Some societies are embryonic, some adolescent, and others mature. At the bottom of the scale there would come animal societies, rising to those of the ant and bee. There are thinkers perhaps who would count these the highest, but most would claim that human societies surpass them, and they would base the claim on the occurrence of a new phenomenon. They would say that in the lowest kind of human societies there is some exercise of freedom on the part of the individual members—that they belong, at least in part, to a given society by their own consent and choice. In other words, they share with it, not only in such things as blood, but in spirit. And they would point out that the element of choice, and so of 'community of spirit,' bulks more and more largely as the scale of societies rises. They would say, for instance, that a nation whose bond is rather loyalty than coercion, is more really a nation than one of which the reverse is true. At least in theory, at the head of the evolution there would stand a society that was so completely knit by a common spirit that its bond was wholly voluntary. This is a definition of the Kingdom of God, and the common spirit is the Holy Spirit. He

is the Spirit of man as well as of God. He is as gentle as He is universal, as incoercive as He is omnipotent. All human fellowship may prove at last both to ground and culminate in Him.

It may be urged against much of this chapter that it requires that an individual or a society may come under the 'influence' of the Spirit of God without knowing it. There was a time perhaps when this objection would have seemed fatal to the suggestion made, but it is no longer so. It is still claimed indeed that no 'influence' can reach its zenith unless it be consciously welcomed. An Englishman cannot be all that an Englishman ought to be unless he be 'filled with' the 'spirit' of England, and he cannot be 'filled with' the 'spirit' of England except with his own enthusiastic consent. Yet is there no way in which a child of six weeks old may rightly be called English? And is this merely a matter of blood? At any rate, as the child grows up, he will come in a thousand ways—in home, in speech, in school, in literature, and so on—under the 'influence' of England. The process will begin long before he is aware of it, longer still before he actively consents to it. Unconsciously received 'influence' may not be all that 'influence' is at its utmost, but it is still 'influence,' and it may be very strong 'influence.' Human life throngs with instances. It has been seen above that, while the Christian doctrine of the Spirit requires that He is more than 'influence,' He is also all that 'influence' is.[1] His quiet sway, whether in individuals or societies, is not and cannot be *complete* without their

[1] pp. 70 ff.

conscious consent, but it may none the less *begin* without it.[1] He lets neither little children nor heathen peoples alone. Here again psychology and theology confirm each other.

[1] Cf. the doctrine of ' prevenient grace.'

XVII

THE TRINITY

At the beginning of the last chapter it was stated that such assertions as 'The Spirit is the Risen Christ' and 'The Spirit is God' raise the problem of the nature of God. If another assertion, 'The Son is God,' is added, we are in full view of the problem to which the usual Christian answer has been the doctrine of the Trinity. Has this doctrine any relation to experience?

When the Church first formulated the doctrine, it proceeded chiefly by the examination of the New Testament. It claimed that this article of its creed was just an epitome of the explicit and implicit teaching of that book. But the New Testament was then, as it is still, the standard or normative account of the Christian experience. It is a mistake, therefore, to treat the doctrine of the Trinity—of the unity and yet the severalty of the divine nature—as a cobweb of useless speculation. It was the outcome of a prolonged and eager attempt to give an account of what God must be, if the Christian experience is true. It is still such an account. There is no need here to trace again the Biblical argument. The writer does not think that recent attempts to show that that argument is mistaken have been successful. Here,

however, the pertinent question is ' Is the doctrine of the Trinity consonant with the phenomena of fellowship ? ' This question will be approached gradually by way of another : ' Does experience in general make the doctrine of the Trinity antecedently unlikely ? '

It has usually been assumed that it does, but the assumption needs examination. For it proceeds upon the postulate that ' of course ' it is absurd that any being should be at once several and one. It is true that logic cannot give any account of such a phenomenon. But it is also true that the phenomenon is as wide as life. For man has no experience of anything unitary which is not also *in some way* several. An example may first be taken from the inanimate world. A stone is one thing—yet it is also a sum of qualities. It has size and colour and weight and shape and hardness and so on. How do these various ' qualities ' come to be one ? Mediaeval thought—and much modern thought is here still Mediaeval—assumed that under these ' accidents ' there lay some ' substance ' which made them somehow one. But the metaphysician of to-day either asks ' What is this " substance ? " ' or asserts ' There is no such " substance." ' On either account the fact of severalty within unity is admitted, even though the explanation of the phenomenon is a ' mystery.' Of course one may claim that any one of the qualities named—say, colour—is a unity that is not also a severalty, but the answer is equally obvious. It is only by abstraction that ' colour ' can be considered alone. It never occurs alone, but always in combination with other qualities in a given ' thing.' In the inanimate world there is

nothing unitary which is not in a way appropriate to that world also several.

The same is true of a plant, but in another way. A plant is a unity, yet it has also severalty. It is root-*plus*-stem-*plus*-leaf-*plus*-flower-*plus*-fruit. What is it that makes these several things one? No botanist can yet fully answer, only he seems quite sure that it is something other and higher than that which makes a stone one. Its name is 'life.' This gives to a plant a several unity appropriate to the world of plants. It is an *organic* manifold. How life achieves this supra-logical result, and even what 'life' is, are 'mysteries.' Yet it is a fact that 'life' does behave in this way, and that it does so in a way that 'transcends' the way of the stone.

In spite of the narrowing of the gap that separates the vegetable from the animal world, it is still usually held that in the latter there is something that the former lacks. This, indeed, might still be so if the series of intervening links should at last prove so continuous that the term 'gap' or 'gaps' would seem unsuitable. For a new phenomenon is still a new one, however gradually it emerge. In the animal world there is more than a hint of what is called 'consciousness' in man. This requires the presence of given physiological and psychological phenomena. There is no need here to discuss the problems involved in the last two statements. The difference that distinguishes an animal from a plant carries with it a difference in the recurrent phenomenon of a manifold unity. The animal has eye and ear, brain and nerve, and with these something of an embryonic psychology, and the unity of these

things requires a mysterious something that 'transcends' the unity of a plant. Some say that this something has in it hints of what is called 'personality' in man, yet that it is not 'personality,' because this is the attribute of man as man. What, then, is this something? No one can say—yet it too is certainly a unity that co-exists with severalty. Again, the two co-exist also on the human plane. Is a man the same man that he was ten years ago? Will he be the same man ten years hence? What do we mean when we speak of our 'higher' and 'lower' 'selves'? How are 'consciousness' and 'subconsciousness' one? Or thought, feeling, and will? Or mind and body? No one can say much more as yet than that there is here a multiplicity within a unity, and that it is of a type appropriate to the world of men. And the latter statement means, not only that it differs from the kind of unity that obtains in the inanimate, plant, and animal realms, but that it is 'higher' than they. It surpasses and 'transcends' them.

This is the best point to turn to a correlative phenomenon. Many things that are at first sight several, turn out on investigation to be one. An instance or two will serve to show what is meant. There was a time when the world of plants tended to be treated not only as disparate with the world of animals but as independent of it. Science is not now so sure. It was always obvious that the animal world could not live without the plant world. The tendency to-day is to find that the converse too is true, and that these two worlds are and perhaps always have been interdependent. In other words, things that seemed

separate are one. Science, again, has shown ever more and more wonderingly the exquisite unity that there is, for instance, in a hive of bees or an ant-hill. One hesitates whether to call such insect societies primarily a unity and secondarily a multitude, or *vice versa*. In fact they seem to be equally both. When the investigation rises to man, we are once more back at the assertion of modern psychology that man is equally 'individual' and 'societary.' In other words, he lives by fellowship.[1] This great word means that he only knows his 'individuality' and develops it because he is 'part and parcel' of a society, and, correlatively, that society can only exist and develop because it consists of 'individuals.' 'Persons feed on persons.' 'I' only know that 'I' am 'I' in contradistinction to 'thou,' and 'I' only know that 'I' am distinct from 'thou' by 'my' fellowship with 'thee.' In man both sets of phenomena reach a relative culmination. Man is one by being many and men are many by being one, in ways that are 'mysteries,' but that are appropriate to the realm of mankind, and that 'transcend' the corresponding methods in which both phenomena occur in 'lower' realms of experience.

Why should the series end in man? If there be a God, why should He not exhibit in a still higher way a characteristic that pervades His universe? Is the mere fact that severalty within unity is a logical contradiction in terms' to make incredible in Him

[1] Give freely to the friend thou hast;
Unto thyself thou givest:
On barren soil thou canst not cast,
For by his life thou livest.
—J. A. Symonds.

what is continually experienced in so many other ways? Is it only when the divine nature is examined that mystery is intolerable? There was a time, indeed, when it would have been said that 'personality' and 'individuality' were synonyms, and that a 'person' as such must be merely 'individual,' but this has been found untrue of the person 'man.' The Christian doctrine of God calls Him 'personal,' and it finds a first account of what this means in man, but, as already more than once suggested, it holds that 'personality' in God, while it is like 'personality' in man, surpasses or 'transcends' it. This may be put in two ways. Either it may be said that while 'personality' in man is imperfect, in God it is perfect, or it may be said that while man is 'personal,' God is 'more than personal,' or 'higher than personal.' Under either definition it is not unreasonable to hold that in the divine nature unity and severalty co-exist in a way that outsoars the highest example else in the universe—that outsoars it even while it is in some ways like it. This is exactly what the Christian doctrine of the Trinity teaches. It declares that within the divine severalty there is a unity that is closer and deeper than in any human society, even as it holds that the divine is individual in a way that no creature ever can be. The creed that man is made in the image of God has usually been applied to man as individual; it may also be applied to man as societary.[1] And, just as in the one application, so in the other, with the likeness there goes a difference, the difference that parts the finite from the infinite—a difference that 'transcends' indeed.

[1] See the writer's *Bible Doctrine of Society*, pp. 274 ff.

Yet to ' transcend ' is not to be altogether unlike. For another analogy may now be traced in the same series of phenomena. When it is said that the unity of a plant ' transcends ' that of a stone, it is meant that it retains something, adds something, and leaves something behind. It retains colour, for instance ; it adds growth ; it leaves utter immobility behind, and begins to defy gravitation. Similarly the unity of the animal, in ' transcending ' that of the plant, retains growth, for instance, adds brain and leaves root behind. A man, ' transcending ' the unity of an animal, retains brain, for instance, adds ' personality,' and leaves behind the ' un-freedom ' that appears to obtain in such a society as a beehive. When the divine nature is compared to the human, the same three truths obtain. ' Personality,' for instance, in its twentieth-century sense rather than its fourth-century, remains ; a kind of unity is added that is unknown even in so close a human society as a home ; the body is left behind. The Christian account of God starts from the vantage ground of the Old Testament. It never falters in its claim that there is but one God, but it adds that the One is yet in some mysterious way several. There is nothing in man's experience of the universe that makes this antecedently incredible, but much that makes it likely. And the nearest of the many distant analogues of the severalty of God is the fellowship of men, even as the nearest of the many distant analogues of His unity is the individuality of man.

It will have been noticed that the word ' severalty ' has been used in the above paragraphs and not the

term 'trinity.' This has been done because, while the argument suggests that there may be a multiplicity within the unity of the divine nature, it does not require that this multiplicity be triune. When the early Christian thinkers first drew out their doctrine of this multiplicity, why did they suggest the number three rather than any other? This brings us back to the distinctively Christian experience. The attempt to find the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament is now abandoned. Such teaching as that of Proverbs about 'wisdom' and that of the Prophets about 'the Spirit' may indeed be hints of the insufficiency of bare unity as an account of what the consciousness of men finds God to be, but no more than this can be said. And it is probable that these hints are more easily distinguishable to-day than they were in the days before Christ. The term 'the Spirit,' in particular, means in the Old Testament 'God at work in man.' Why should the first Christians mean anything else by it? The answer begins, once more, from their distinctive experience, the experience of the risen Christ.[1] At Pentecost they were aware that they had

[1] A later witness that the Christian experience implies the doctrine of the Trinity may be cited. Wesley, who perhaps talked with more 'simple believers' about their religious experience than any man in history, says at the end of his sermon on the Trinity, 'The knowledge of the three-one God is interwoven with all true Christian faith, with all vital religion. I do not say that every real Christian can say with the Marquis de Renty, "I bear about with me continually an experimental verity, and a plenitude of the presence of the ever-blessed Trinity." I apprehend that this is not the experience of babes, but rather fathers in Christ. But I know not how any one can be a Christian believer, till he hath (as St. John speaks) "the witness in himself"; till "the Spirit of God witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God"; that is, in effect, till God the Holy Ghost witnesses that God the Father has accepted Him, through the merits of God the Son; and having this witness, he honours the Son, and the blessed Spirit, "even as he honours the Father." Not that every Christian adverts to this; perhaps at first not one in twenty; but if you ask any of them a few questions, you will find it implied in what he believes.'

the Spirit of Christ, and that He was the Spirit of God. This was the order of their thought. It was *obvious* that what they received was the Spirit of Christ; He needed to be *identified* as the Spirit of God. In other words, for Christians the Holy Spirit from the first differed from the Father in the manner of His relation to Christ. While the Father 'sent' the Son, the Son 'sent' the Spirit. In the phraseology of an experience that had not yet been analysed, '[Jesus] poured forth this.'[1] 'This' could not be the Father. In some recent discussions of New Testament doctrine too little attention has been paid to those passages which teach what used to be called the 'subordination,' alongside equality, of the Son and the Spirit to the Father. The most famous of these passages is in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians; 'Then cometh the end, when [Christ] shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father . . . that God may be all in all.'[2] If any find it difficult to conceive how subordination may co-exist with equality, may he not begin with the analogy of a human home? In how many true homes there exists between an adult son and a father a subordination that is also an equality. But the chief point just here is that the Christian, finding that the Father and the Spirit differed in their relation to him through the Christ, refused merely to identify them.

Why then should not the Spirit be merely identified with Christ? This is the tendency to-day. It is claimed that both the New Testament and later Christian experience really identify the Spirit with the

[1] Acts ii. 33. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 24–28.

glorified Christ, and that to distinguish them in any way is a mistake of Christian speculation. What is to be said of this claim?

Two preliminary remarks may be made. First, both parties to this argument assert that the Christian experience of 'the Spirit' is more than that of the 'influence' of a dead teacher. Those who identify the Spirit with the glorified Christ hold, like those who do not, that the glorified Christ is a living person, and that the Christian has fellowship with a living person.[1] The second remark is that Christian theology, here as elsewhere, seeks to do justice, not only to what the New Testament says, but to what it necessarily implies. If Christian teaching is not to explain Scripture, but only to quote it, its task is meagre indeed.

Why then did the first Christian thinkers at once identify and distinguish between the glorified Christ and the Spirit? Some say that it was through misunderstanding the highly figurative character of New Testament speech—that, for instance, when the Fourth Evangelist seems so clearly to distinguish the future 'Paraclete' from Christ, he is only using an effective figure. In passing, one may express surprise that Greek-speaking thinkers, who were themselves so much nearer both the time and the mental environment of the first century, should have made such a mistake. But, in fact, the ground of their procedure was quite different. For those who believed in the physical resurrection of Jesus, who believed that therefore there was a sense in which He was 'away' from them, who believed that there was a sense in

[1] See pp. 73 ff.

which He would at the Parousia 'come back,'[1] and yet who knew that they now held fellowship with a living Person,—for such men merely to identify the Spirit with the Christ was all but impossible. When the New Testament was written, there were still those living who believed that they had seen the Risen Lord, and that now they 'saw Him no more,' and their fellow-Christians agreed that this was so. If they thought that the Spirit was 'Jesus back again' and that this was all there was to say about Him, how could there be a belief in a Parousia at all? Or how could Paul say, 'In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead *bodily*'?[2] Theology is organic. Its parts have unsuspected connexions with each other. The modern denial of the physical resurrection of Jesus has its reaction upon the doctrine of the Godhead. If Christ has in no sense or way a 'body' now, it seems easy, at least at first sight, to declare that there is no distinction between Him and the Spirit, but only identity. But for those who thought that the glorified Christ had a 'body,' it was so difficult as to be impossible. For them it was necessary both to identify the Son and the Spirit and to distinguish them.

The question whether the Risen Christ has in any sense a 'body' will be examined later. But, even if it should prove true that the 'resurrection' is 'purely spiritual'—to quote the current phrase—are all questions about the distinction between Christ and the Spirit thereby put to rest? As already hinted, it is only 'at first sight' that this is so. For Christians

[1] See pp. 90 ff. [2] Col. ii. 9.

who believe that there is no place for 'matter' in the hereafter, are not usually pantheists. They do not believe that at death men cease to be separate persons and lapse in God. They believe that 'I' will still be 'I' and 'thou' will still be 'thou' and 'he' will still be 'he.' They would say that they believe these things because they believe that in the Hereafter men will still be men. Is Christ still a man in the Hereafter? The question is not 'Has He still human qualities?' for the Christian account of the Father requires that He too has human qualities, however 'transcended.' The doctrine that man is made in the 'image of God' demands this. Is the glorified Christ 'human' in no other sense than the Father is? It does not seem that He can be, if He is no more now than a universal Spirit. In other words, on this theory Christ in the Hereafter gives up being *a* man. But how then can He be 'the first-born of many brethren'? How can His 'resurrection' be the type and warrant of ours, as Paul so continually declares? How can it be even metaphorically true that 'When He shall appear, we shall be like Him'? Surely the Christian experience requires a Christ who has not ceased to be a man. The natural desire for a 'simple gospel' tends to-day to two beliefs—that Christ was human, and human only, before the Resurrection; and that after it He became divine and divine only. But there is a simplicity that is too simple.[1] Does not the identification of the Spirit with the glorified Christ, and the denial of any distinction between

[1] Of course other difficulties ensue as well as the one named here. For instance, how can One who was merely human and is merely divine be the same person?

them, mean that after the Resurrection there was no longer a God-man? To-day it is often claimed that the Chalcedonian Formula, in spite of all efforts to the contrary, did less than justice to the human nature of Jesus Christ, and that in consequence later Christians betook themselves to the Virgin and the Saints, since these seemed human enough for fellowship. It would be strange indeed if this age, with its intense devotion to the 'human Jesus,' should repeat the old mistake in a new and unsuspected way. Yet merely to equate the Spirit and the glorified Christ, seems to involve just this error. It is possible to apply the epithet 'human,' in a special sense, to the Spirit;[1] but it is unnatural that He should be called 'Man' or 'Son of Man,' and it is impossible to call Him 'a man.' Yet if the full humanity of the Risen Christ is to be assured, all three must be true of Him.[2]

Another question may be asked. If the Son has now ceased to be a man, why should He not be identified with the Father as well as with the Spirit? Is not the Unitarian right after all? It would not surprise the writer if this proved to be the next suggestion. It need not, however, be fully discussed here, but a single point may be taken. 'At sundry times and in divers manners' in Christian history the suggestion has been made that the doctrine of the Trinity provides an explanation of the way in which God Himself may enjoy perfect fellowship. This enjoyment is not, of course, possible to an eternal solitary. Nor could God's fellowship with any creature provide a fellowship adequate to His nature, and an inadequate fellowship

[1] Cf. pp. 152 f. [2] Cf. p. 183.

is imperfect. Yet it would seem that to deny that God can enjoy perfect fellowship, is to make Him less than a perfect person—in short, to make Him an imperfect God. There is here, therefore, another reason why severalty should be asserted of Him in some way. This is implied in such a Scripture phrase as 'God only-begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father.[1]' This claim has been restated to-day, and is a favourite one with writers on theology. It would, of course, disappear if the Glorified Christ were identified with God as well as with the Spirit. Some may say that His distinction from the Father while He was 'upon earth' carries with it a perpetual distinction. Was He not distinct from the Spirit too when 'on earth'? Or was there no 'Spirit' then? Or was the Spirit then the same as God? If so, is He not so now? And does it not follow that God, the Spirit, and the Glorified Christ, are all but different names for a single being? These questions are not mere conundrums. The doctrine of the Trinity does declare that within the nature of the One God there is such a severalty as gives ground for the claim that fellowship is one of His 'characters.' And the delight of God in fellowship is basal to religion. On what ground else should men be His friends?

Perhaps a very tentative question may further be asked, since it has to do with the subject of fellowship. The late Dr. Illingworth was one of the best known of modern exponents of the doctrine of the Trinity, and he urged the argument that this doctrine finds place for fellowship in the nature of God with great

[1] John i. 18 (as in earliest documents).

persuasiveness. His critics, however, while admitting the value of his discussion, almost all fastened upon his account of the part played by the Spirit in the divine fellowship as the 'weak point' in his argument. He used the word 'relation,' and said that the Spirit was that by which the Father and the Son are related to each other. Since his book, *Personality, Human and Divine*, was written, however, much study has been expended upon the nature of human societies. There was a time when many would have said that their members had no more than a 'relation' to each other. Few would say so now. As already seen, most thinkers claim that societies have a 'reality' of their own, and a reality that belongs to the 'spiritual' and psychological realm, though they do not yet agree what it is. It has been suggested above that ultimately a Christian philosophy may find that the link of every true society among men is the Holy Spirit.[1] Is it possible that here there is a hint too of His part in the divine nature—that once again the best starting-point for the understanding of God is the nature of man, and the nature of man as societary as well as individual? Is man here too 'made in the likeness of God'? Is God here too the ideal after which man for ever feels? If some mysterious psychological 'reality' truly 'relates' men, and if the 'relation' of men to each other in deep fellowships demands a 'reality' that is far more than a 'relation,' may not this be so too in a way that is at once similar and transcendent, in the very nature of God? Whatever may be said about these last queries, however, the

[1] pp. 158 ff.

main conclusions seem to be that it is quite consonant with all our knowledge that the Godhead should be a severalty-in-unity, and that the phenomena of the Christian consciousness, in particular, define the severalty as Trinity.

XVIII

MAN AND MANKIND

So far we have dealt chiefly with the implicates of the Christian experience about the nature of God. As, however, this experience is that of fellowship between God and men, it has not been possible to examine these implicates without saying something and implying more about the nature of man. In all religions the doctrines of God and man tend to go together. The Christian doctrine of man may now be more directly and explicitly examined from the standpoint of the Christian's fellowship with Christ.

There can be no fellowship between any two persons unless they are in some degree alike. For instance, a musician can have no fellowship in the realm of music with one born deaf, but he may with one born blind, for he shares with the latter the experience of sound. It is a commonplace in education to-day that a teacher must first win his scholar's 'sympathy'—in other words, he must enter into fellowship with him—and that he can only do this if he find some common ground in thought and desire to start from. Or again, men explain the failure of an ill-assorted marriage by saying, 'The two had nothing in common.' No doubt the word 'nothing' is an exaggeration, for there are no two human beings who have absolutely 'nothing in

common.' What is meant is that for a deep and lasting fellowship two persons must have much in common. And this means that their 'personalities,' if the word may be allowed, must be to a great extent alike, both on the sides of knowledge, of feeling, and of will. We sometimes speak of a man's fellowship with a dog or a horse. If this means anything, it postulates something akin to mind in the dog or the horse. Even at their best such fellowships are severely limited, for the 'something akin' is slight and evasive. It is impossible to speak of a man's fellowship with a plant at all. Fellowship implies that those who share it have something in common and are so far alike.

Many religions claim that men hold fellowship with a god or gods. This is one of the elements, for instance, in the usual meaning of 'prayer.' It follows that for these religions men and gods are in some way alike. Both the Hebrew and the Christian religions belong to this class. They both teach, therefore, that man is in some way and degree like God. The usual theological phrase is borrowed from the First Chapter of Genesis: man is said to be made 'in the image of God.' There is no need to draw out the doctrine for either Testament. Several familiar texts spring to the mind: 'Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy'; 'Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect'; 'Be ye imitators of God, as beloved children'; 'Partakers of the divine nature';[1] and so on. But, here again, any selected texts are only signs of something deeper and pervasive. The Old and the New Testaments require a high

[1] Lev. xix. 2; Matt. v. 48; Eph. v. 1; 2 Pet. i. 4.

doctrine of man, for, if he is in no way like God, the religion of the Bible collapses. The Bible is just the story of the deepening and heightening of men's fellowship with God, and fellowship is impossible between the altogether unlike. When Jesus told men that God is their Father, He implied that they are His children, and therefore that it is their true nature to be like Him. We are able to hold fellowship with God because we can begin our prayers with 'Our Father.' [1]

Yet religions have differed in their answers to the question: 'In what ways and in what degree are God and men alike?' Some of them have said that gods have bodies like men, and polytheism and idolatry have ensued. The Old Testament tells how the Hebrews came to refuse this error. Its teaching, however, goes further. Any reader, for instance, of the great nineteenth chapter of Leviticus knows this. It begins with the command 'Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord thy God am holy,' and it goes on to apply the command to the details of men's daily life, until it strikes upon the great saying, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' In modern terms, it begins to practise the theory that man is like God in being 'personal.' The ground of their likeness is not 'physical' but 'psychological.' The New Testament completes the lesson, and it completes it by the Incarnation. It claims that a single person was and is both God and man, or rather was and is God-man. Such a doctrine is only possible if there be some degree of likeness between God and man. It is not always

[1] The criticism may be made that elsewhere the argument is from man to God, and that now it is back from God to man. The answer is that their fellowship implies truths about both.

noticed that the New Testament represents the Incarnation, not so much as alteration in the Divine nature, but rather as abstinence. Paul, for instance, does not say that 'being in the form of God,' Christ 'altered His nature,' but that He 'emptied Himself.' It is possible to trace a likeness between man and God in all the three functions of 'personality.' Man, like God, can and does know. His knowledge is limited, but it is real, and he can and does seek continually to perfect his knowledge in the ideal called 'truth.' Man, again, can will. In other words, he is free. He has not, of course, an unlimited freedom, or such an 'omnipotence' as was ascribed above to God, but within narrow limits his freedom is real. And in its practice he may and does set before himself the ideal of 'holiness' or 'good,' which, as will appear below, is for him freedom consummated. Man, once more, may feel, as God feels, the word being used not in its physical sense, where man shares with the animal, but in the 'personal' sense. For instance, like God, man loves. And on this side too there is an ideal. It is usually named 'beauty,' and the word may be accepted if its connotation include the *love* of the perfect in all realms. The Incarnation defines the scope and way of man's likeness to God. The Christian seeks to be like Christ and so to be like God. An idealist would say—and the writer is an idealist here—that man's destiny is continuous progress towards an infinite and inexhaustible ideal. The Christian looks to spend a happy eternity in becoming ever more and more like the God-man. Christ is the altogether true, and the altogether good, and—in

spite of the frequent omission of this third claim—the ' altogether lovely ' too. For there is nothing so beautiful in human story as the life of Jesus, and the Risen Christ has not lost that mark. The Bible doctrine *of man* makes at last such claims as these: ' The Word became flesh,' ' Christ Jesus, being in the form of God ' was ' found in fashion as a man.'[1] It is even true that the New Testament hardly has a separate account of ' human nature ' at all; its teaching about man is chiefly an inference from its teaching about Christ.

Another truth about fellowship may now be recalled. In every true human fellowship there is not only an initial likeness, but a further process of likening goes on. Where the two who share the fellowship are more or less equals, this process is mutual, but where one is greater than the other, it is the less who changes into the likeness of the greater. So in the Christian's fellowship with Christ, the ' believer ' grows ever more and more like his Master. This is the way of ways to grow like God. For, as Christ is man as well as God, the Christian's fellowship with Him is closer and wider than any man's fellowship with God in other religions can be. The Incarnation defines man's likeness to God, but it does more—it opens the way by which a man's ' personality,' starting with a certain embryonic likeness to God, may grow more and more like its great Examplar.[2]

It will be found below that this process does not end

[1] John i. 14; Phil. ii. 6, 8.

[2] See chapter on ' Fellowship and Eternity.' The complementariness of growth and achievement, traced in the chapter on ' The " Saint " and the " Perfect," ' may also be remembered.

with death, but that the Christian claims that his fellowship with Christ continues in eternity, and that there he will still be 'changed from glory unto glory into the same image.' He begins to be like the man Christ Jesus here, but he goes on to be still more like Him 'there.' So we return to an old question by a new *route*. Some talk as though Christ were not now 'Man' except in some such fashion as there was for Plato an 'idea' called 'man.' It has been claimed above that there is truth in the Platonic parallel[1] but is it the whole truth? If it is, why an Incarnation at all? The usual answer is that it was necessary that the 'idea' become part and parcel of history, that it was not enough that the Son should have human qualities, that He must be 'a man' as well as 'man.' If this be so, must He not still be 'a man,' if He is to be man's 'forerunner' and type in eternity? Will it suffice that He is now God with human qualities? Is the Christian's fellowship no longer with One who is both God and man? Is Christ's manhood only 'general' now? Once more it appears that a distinction must be made between the Son and the Spirit. 'The first-born among many brethren' is not only brotherly but a brother. Jesus Christ is still a man, and so still the type for every man.

But man is societary as well as individual. While this fact shows itself in every true society, it reaches its widest and final instance in the idea represented by the word 'mankind.' It is an old and common idea that there is a sense in which all men are one. A frequent way of saying this in times when men naturally

[1] p. 127.

thought in myths, was to present the human race as the children of a single human pair. In New Testament times the Rabbis expressed it by treating all men as one 'in Adam.' The Athenians of the same epoch recognized the thought as familiar when Paul quoted a line from the Greek poets: 'We are also [God's] offspring.' The Apostle could rely upon his philosophic hearers to interpret the saying in no physical sense, but in the Stoic fashion, and this fashion made it an assertion of the unity of mankind. There is no need to multiply instances of the notion. A question follows from it. If man be societary, and if this culminates in the assertion that mankind is one, what doctrine of mankind, as distinct from man, does the Christian experience demand?

This question can be discussed without prejudging another: will the final and perfected mankind include every man? For it is possible to define the 'hereafter' of a resolutely wicked man precisely as self-exclusion from the true mankind. Has Christianity any doctrine of mankind to answer to its doctrine of man? The answer pervades all the New Testament writings, with the doubtful exception of the Synoptic Gospels. It declares that men are one with each other because they are one with Christ. To draw this out, something already said may be recalled.[1] It is epitomised in the Pauline figure of the Church as the 'body of Christ,' the Johannine figure of the Vine and its Branches, and the concept of the writer to the Hebrews that Jesus is the High-Priest of a new Israel. The writer would add the concept, 'Son of Man,' as

[1] pp. 127ff.

found in the teaching of Jesus Himself, for it does not seem to him possible to reduce the meaning of that term to 'mortal man' or to anything that excludes the notion that Jesus—to use a phrase of Paul's—'sums up' the race.[1] A number of other passages at once throng. 'We love because He first loved us,' 'The last Adam is a life-giving spirit,' 'The first-born among many brethren,' are three of the most familiar.[2] The New Testament thinkers have the thought that men are 'brethren,' and so one with each other, because they 'have all one Father,' but, while they have it, they do not stress it as modern writers do. With them men's unity depends primarily upon a common relation to *Christ*. No doubt, when sought into, the one relation requires the other, but the question here is of the starting-point of thought. For the first Christians Jesus Christ was the Head of a new and true mankind. To quote the Latin equivalent for the Greek term used in a text already quoted, He is the 'recapitulation' of mankind, as Irenaeus loved to say. The societary consequences cannot be better put than in a verse of John: 'That which we have seen and heard (concerning the Word of Life) declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us; yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.'[3] Fellowship with Christ is fellowship with God, and fellowship with men. Men are to be finally one with each other 'in Christ.'[4] It

[1] Eph. i. 10.
[2] 1 John iv. 19; 1 Cor. xv. 45; Rom. viii. 29.
[3] 1 John i. 3.
[4] 'Christ believed it possible to bind man to their kind, but on one condition—that they were first fast bound to Himself.'—Seeley, in *Ecce Homo*.

is clear that if Christ is 'a man,' and if mankind is one at all, He must be part and parcel of that unity, and, if He shares in it, He can only share in one way. He is its Head or nothing. Mankind is to be integrate in Christ. He is Man as well as a man. This is one reason why He is Lord, and why it seems so 'natural' to obey Him utterly.

It will be said that most of the great passages named do not refer to mankind, but to the Church. This is true, yet the reference is to the Ideal Church, to the Church as it ought to be. And the Church as it ought to be, as it constantly strives to be, as it will at length come to be, is just a perfected mankind. Of the 'Holy City, new Jerusalem' it is written that 'the nations shall walk by the light thereof.'[1] The Church of Christ is the 'incipient' Kingdom of God, and when it is no longer incipient but complete, it will include the race. 'Thy Kingdom come, as in heaven, so on earth' cannot be a prayer for less than the perfecting of mankind. What part is the 'Son of Man' to play in that Kingdom? Once more, there can only be one answer. The Christian experience is of the fellowship of single men with Christ, yet also of a company of men with Christ. It covers both the individual and the societary in man. And it involves a high doctrine both of man and of mankind. For 'in Christ' both are 'one with God.'

Yet, while the Christian doctrine of Man and Mankind begins from the doctrine of the Person of Christ, it does not end there. As has been seen, the New Testament account of man had anticipations in the Old Testament.

[1] Rev. xxi. 24.

There man is said to be like God. This idea persists into the New Testament. The very doctrine of the God-man itself implies it. Again, when Christ taught the full Fatherhood of God, He thereby of course taught the highest possible doctrine of man. Similarly, if the chapter on the Holy Spirit be recalled, it will be clear that the doctrine of His ' immanence ' in man, both individual and societary, involves the same lofty doctrine. If it is true that men, taken one by one, and mankind, taken as a whole, are alike capable of the fellowship of the Spirit of God—are alike made for such fellowship—then it is impossible to teach any ignoble doctrine of human nature. In other words, the Christian doctrine of man may be approached either from the side of the Father, or the Son, or the Spirit, and the same goal is reached. So once more it appears that ' these three are one.' A high doctrine of human nature is involved whenever a child or a man is baptized ' into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.'

XIX

FREEDOM AND FELLOWSHIP

FIFTY years ago the enemy of freedom, whether in the instance of God or man, was materialistic determinism. The students of science were chiefly occupied with the 'physical sciences,' and within this realm there is no such thing, of course, as the freedom of 'persons,' for within it there are no 'persons.' As for 'God,' the utmost that so limited a study could yield about 'Him' was that there might be behind all things a great, blind Force, whose nearest analogy was some such 'physical' thing as gravitation. As for man, he too must be brought within the compass of the 'physical,' and everything in him that refused to be so reduced could only be delusion. This process of thought, in denying 'freedom,' reacted on the allied idea of 'cause.' The only meaning that the physical science can give to 'cause' is 'invariable antecedent,' or some similar phrase, and this meaning was confidently given to the word even when used of God or man. All the protests of religious thinkers, that in the world of men there is something that may be named 'person,' which is not found in the 'physical' world, and which therefore no explanation derived entirely from the phenomena of that world could fully explain—all these protests were ignored or flouted. It is no longer

necessary to fight this old battle, for it seems fairly clear that the issue, at least for the present generation, is settled. And the victory has gone to the religious thinker. This is because he was more scientific than the exponents of physical science. He demanded that *all* the facts should be collated, and that no explanation of ' psychological ' phenomena could be adequate which built only on ' physical ' phenomena. The attention of men of science, or of large numbers of them, has now moved to the ' psychological ' field. And here they have found themselves confronted by a complex phenomenon called ' person,' which includes in its elements phenomena of ' freedom ' and ' cause ' for which no complete analogies are to be found in the non-psychological world. It is now admitted that these things are unique, and that they need explanation.

Meanwhile there has also been a change in the world of philosophical thought. Philosophy, of course, does take account of the world of persons. Seventy years ago, in the world at large, the prevailing philosophy was Hegelian. This philosophy too denied that men have liberty in the sense of choice. It admitted liberty in another sense, which will be named below, but in the ordinary sense of the term—in the sense that a man, as being a ' person,' has a relative and limited but real ' independence,' alike of other men and of God—' freedom ' was denied. And, indeed, so long as the only ' test of truth ' was held to be intellectual, this conclusion was hard to avoid. Here, again, however, religious thinkers held on to ' the facts,' even though they could not explain them. And they added that it was impossible to *live* except on the hypothesis of

freedom, however impossible it might seem to *think* consistently without its denial. In reality, the appeal was to what is now called the ' pragmatic test ' of truth. The student of philosophy knows that the admission of the validity of this test was made, in his own way, by Kant, when he found a place in his philosophy for the ' practical reason ' as well as for the ' theoretic,' how in more recent times a purely ' pragmatic ' philosophy has arisen, and how to-day there is a tendency to allow that both the ' intellectual test ' and the ' pragmatic test ' have their place in a complete philosophy. The second phrase is being abandoned by some, however, in favour of some such expression as ' test of value.'[1] The battle about freedom in philosophy, however, is not yet so nearly over as in the realm of science. It still rages. Yet it is increasingly admitted that a true philosophy must give some account of the fact that it is only possible for men to *live* by the axiom of freedom. Christian thinkers, in particular, more and more claim that in the ultimate Christian philosophy room must be found for ' value ' as well as consistency, for the ' pragmatic test ' as well as the ' intellectual,' and, by consequence, for freedom in man as well as in God.

The last phrase recalls a third battle about ' freedom.' Its reality has been denied not only by scientific thinkers and by philosophers, but by religious thinkers too. Augustine, and after him Calvin, denied it, in its usual sense of choice, because Paul seemed to deny it, and because it seemed incompatible with the sovereignty of God. This controversy, at least for the present, is asleep. The ' lion ' lies down with the ' lamb,' or rather

[1] Cf. pp. 111 f.

the 'lions' on both sides lie down with the 'lambs' on both. The teachers in Churches that used to 'stand for' Calvinism proclaim that 'there is truth in Arminianism after all,' and the teachers of erstwhile Arminian Churches assert that 'there must be a place in theology for the great truth of the sovereignty of God.' In other words, it is admitted that here too the nearest approximation to truth is by antinomy—by an assertion that two things are both true which to the limited human mind seem logically inconsistent. And this is one of the places where antinomy is appropriate, for wherever men come to consider the nature of God they peer over a boundary into a world that they cannot explore. The mind of God transcends their poor logic. And this is the conclusion that more careful study finds to underlie the thought of Paul. He believed both in the freedom of man and the sovereignty of God.[1] If ever the old religious controversy should awake, it will awake to take account of this antinomy.

The phenomena of fellowship—to return more closely to the immediate subject—perhaps help to make the antinomy less incomprehensible. If both God and man are 'persons,' it follows, as already stated, that the power of God is more like power in man than anything else. Yet there are different kinds of power in the realm of man. There is the physical force by which, say, a foot crushes a worm; there is the military power of a despot; there is the authority of a father in a home. To which is the power of God like? To-day it is more and more claimed that the last is the true analogue, because it is an instance of the 'noblest'

[1] See, for instance, Sanday and Headlam's *Romans*, especially pp. 347 ff.

kind of power. In other words, the test of ' value ' is introduced. The power of a true father in a true home is more likely to suggest the nature of the power of God than the power of the driver of a steam-roller. Now a true father in a true home ' gets his way on the whole ' by the admission of a limited but growing degree of freedom in his children, and not by its denial. And in a perfect home, if such there were, a father would ' get all his own way ' just by giving each child more and more liberty to do as he himself liked. How would he achieve so contradictory a consummation? By the use of fellowship. As has already been seen, in fellowship persons grow more and more to be like each other—that is, to agree with each other—that is, to choose the same things. Or, to use a theological phrase, where there is ' unity of spirit,' agreement and freedom are correlative. Once more, it has been seen above that where fellowship obtains between two who are unequal in character, it is the weaker that grows like the stronger. In a true home, through fellowship the undeveloped nature of the child grows more and more like that of the father. As it does so, the father's ' authority ' and the child's choice coincide, and consummation abolishes contradiction. Does not the one perfect Father use this way with His children? And does it not mean that, through fellowship with Him, men more and more do as they like, yet like and choose that which is consonant with His will? So, in the beautiful phrase of the Anglican Liturgy, ' service is perfect freedom.'[1]

[1] So Epictetus: ' as free yet as the servants of God.' Dean Church *Occasional Papers*, vol. i. p. 124.

It will be found that this concept of the true nature of power over persons begins to obtain also in other societies beside the family. In the school, for instance, the more nearly a teacher succeeds in ' getting his own way ' by ' influence '—that is, by fellowship—the more nearly perfect a teacher he is counted. Similarly, the definition of ' power ' in the political realm has changed. For millenniums the despot was taken by many as the type of power in the State. To-day, however, such a ' statesman ' as Cavour is rather the ideal. It was a supreme example of his skill that he used so many of the discordant factions of Italian life in the middle of the nineteenth century to achieve the end that was both his and theirs—the liberty and unity of Italy. To a given degree he let each faction ' do as it liked,' and through this very freedom achieved his end. To use a rather threadbare theological expression, he ' over-ruled ' the use of freedom rather than forbade it.[1] Is not the sovereignty of God more nearly expressed if He be compared to a statesman like Cavour than to a force like gravity or a despot like Aurangzebe? Is it not better still expressed if it be called the power of a true and perfect Father?

But it may be objected, ' Yes, but this assumes that there is fellowship—that is, that there is some degree of agreement between the ruler and the ruled—what if the latter use his freedom to rebel? Is not this just what man does when he sins? ' Again, the answer, so

[1] Some recent writers (e.g. McDowall, *Evolution, Knowledge and Revelation*, p. 16) offer a suggestion, from the realm of evolution, of the method of this ' overruling.' They show how classes of beings that ' choose ' the wrong line of evolution may continue for a while, but, being more and more unable to adapt themselves to changes in environment, at length die out, So ' choice ' exists, yet a given course of evolution is secured.

far as there can be one, is to be sought by the analogy of human societies rather than by the study of physics. How does a statesman of to-day treat recalcitrant citizens—even when his power, as for example in the India of the nineteenth century, does not depend on the consent of the citizens? First, he limits the scope of their liberty; second, within prescribed limits he lets them both use and abuse it, that so they may learn its mastery. Similarly, if a child be rebellious in a true home, the father sets indeed limits to its freedom, but within those limits he does not altogether refuse the exercise of liberty to the child, even though the child often abuse it. For it is only by the use of freedom that its right use can be learnt. It is the old creed of the Christian that God follows just this method among men. He limits their freedom narrowly; we do not stay often enough to consider how narrowly. Yet within a limited realm He leaves men to do as they choose. Only so can a man learn to use liberty aright. And only so can he learn to be a true 'fellow,' or friend, of God. In other words, the perfect Person does perfectly what imperfect persons strive imperfectly to do. This may be true even though the imperfect cannot give a full account of the perfect practice of their own method. How should they? Here, as elsewhere, the nearest approximation to an account of God starts from an account of man. There is a valid 'anthropomorphism', for an 'anthropomorphic' account of God is more nearly true than a 'hylo-morphic' or a 'zoo-morphic.' He is more like a man than a stone or an animal.[1]

This account of the nature of God's power, as it

[1] Cf. Appendix B.

occurs in the realm of men, recalls another feature of fellowship. It was stated above that fellowship is at its best among the free.[1] This may now be drawn out at a little greater length. There are instances of human fellowship within which one, at least, of the parties, or even all, do not much use freedom. A child could not entirely refuse fellowship with the other members of the family into which it is born, nor could a man easily 'dissociate' himself entirely from his fellow-townsmen or fellow-countrymen, and so on. Yet it is usually allowed that, just in so far as fellowship is 'un-free,' it is imperfect. A home grows perfect as the unchosen fellowship of the child with its other members grows into a chosen fellowship. A nation is more and more nearly what a nation should be, in proportion as its citizens are 'loyal'—that is, in so far as they choose to belong to its fellowship, and choose in no lukewarm sense, but with an eager abandon. Similarly it may be maintained that at first every person born into the world has willy-nilly some degree of fellowship with God. The doctrines of the Spirit and of Conscience require this. But, as years pass, this fellowship either grows by choice or shrinks by choice. It can only become what true fellowship ought to be if it become more and more the fellowship of the free. Here, again, the final example is perhaps in the Trinity. Next to that high example would come the fellowship of the 'saint' with 'Christ in God' or 'God in Christ.' In it there is no place for coercion. It is a poor account of God which demands that His fellowship with man must for ever be imperfect. To claim

[1] Cf. pp. 159 ff.

that God longs to call men 'friends' rather than 'bondmen,' and that at last through Christ that longing fulfils itself, is to give a higher account of God, as well as of man, than to assert that the perfect fellowship of the free is impossible between them.

The word 'freedom' so far has meant 'freedom of choice'—freedom, that is, to choose between the good and the bad, the true and the false, the lovely and the unlovely, or between the more and less good, the more and less true, the more and less lovely. It is the nature of this freedom of choice to pass away. For instance, it is possible that, at a given stage in life, one boy might become either a chemist or an artist, another a mechanic or a policeman. But, as they grow older, the limits of their freedom shrink. If one choose to be a chemist, for instance, and therefore give himself to a certain kind of study and to a certain kind of life, the time comes when it is no longer possible, at least so far as 'this life' stretches, that he should be an artist. There is a classic example in the story of Darwin. He chose to be a 'man of science.' In his early life he liked music, but he himself tells how, as life wore on, he 'appreciated' art less and less. In him the capacity for art was at least dormant, if not dead. Further, the more heartily a man gives himself to the life of his choice, the less able is he later to forsake that life for another. It is the nature of freedom of choice to pass. It belongs to the earlier stages in the making of 'personality.' No one can wholly keep it even in 'this life.' Either in 'this life' or in the next, there must come a stage in the process of the making of 'personality' when freedom of choice is altogether gone. This stage is

reached, not because freedom is taken away by any external power, but because the development of ' personality ' itself requires its passing. We say that a true artist ' simply can't ' paint something ugly, that a ' real saint ' ' simply can't ' do anything mean, that God ' cannot do evil.' Why? By no outward constraint, but because these several ' persons ' are what they are. A man cannot retain the freedom of choice with which he begins. It is its nature to shrink, and at last to perish.

But a man can decide in what way it shall shrink, into what it shall perish. He who chooses the good habitually—and just in so far as he so chooses—comes to ' be ' good, and this means that he is winning a ' good ' personality, which ' of its own nature ' will manifest itself in a good life. Similarly, if a man choose always the true, the time comes when truth has so ' entered into ' his character that he ' cannot away with ' a lie. On the other hand, he who habitually chooses the evil, the false, or the unlovely—and in proportion as he so chooses—will gradually grow unable to choose anything else than these. Freedom of choice perishes, but, as it perishes, it decides what shall take its place. This brings us to the other sense of ' freedom ' noted above. It is sometimes defined as ' freedom of self-realization,' ' liberty to be what one ought to be,' ' power to fulfil the end of one's personality.' This sense of the word ' freedom ' is a true sense, but it is to be clearly distinguished from freedom of choice. ' Freedom of nature,' if the phrase may be allowed, is the only freedom that can be attributed to God. It is also the freedom to which ' persons in the making,' who

use freedom of choice aright, continually approximate. It is what Paul meant by 'the liberty of the glory of the children of God.' On the other hand, to choose the evil brings its own result. The New Testament calls this 'bondservice'—'the bondservice of sin.' Under it a man condemns himself to failure—to be what he ought not to be.[1]

Here, however, fellowship again intervenes. The last paragraphs only tell part of the truth. We do indeed 'make ourselves,' yet we also 'make one another,' for a man cannot help being 'societary' as well as individual, and, as already seen, he belongs, at least in his earliest years, to such societies as his family and his nation without his own choice. Yet here too his freedom of choice has scope. He can choose to continue in a society into which he was born, or to forsake it for another. He may forsake home or country. Again, he can choose to enter into a given new fellowship and to refuse another—for instance, he can make this person his friend, and decline to make that other his friend. And, as he refuses this kind of fellowship and chooses that, he is deciding indirectly what kind of person he shall himself become, for 'persons feed on persons'—it is by fellowship that we live and by fellowship that we grow. And here again, if the choice be rightly made, a man's freedom of

[1] Hartley Coleridge has given this truth poignant expression in the inscription that he wrote in one of his books:

When I received this volume small
My years were barely seventeen,
And it was hoped I should be all
Of what, alas, I might have been.

And now my years are thirty-five,
And every mother hopes her lamb,
And every happy child alive,
Will never be what now I am.

choice tends to pass into 'freedom of nature';[1] if he wrongly choose in fellowship, his freedom of choice tends to pass into a kind of bondage in which he cannot rightly 'fulfil his nature.'

All this is commonplace, yet how close is its application to a Christian's fellowship with Christ. It has been seen above that the Christian experience requires that man was made to enter into fellowship with God, and that 'in Christ' the Christian does so. Surely a man's decision whether he shall welcome or decline this fellowship is most decisive of all. Surely, if 'in Christ' he has fellowship with God, he thereby has fellowship with all other good men.[2] Once more, in fellowship with Christ he comes to be like the one perfect man. Here there emerges again the wider and deeper meaning of the name 'Son of Man.' Surely then, by the fellowship of Christ a man will reach that freedom of self-realization which is the proper euthanasia of freedom of choice. Without this fellowship no developing 'personality' can reach its own perfection; with it none can miss its consummation. John puts the truth as usual, in his own final way: 'If the Son shall make you free, you will be really free.'[3] The doctrine of freedom and the doctrine of fellowship complete each other.

[1] The writer once heard a lecture on a branch of Italian painting in the London National Gallery. The lecturer said that Raphael attended Perugino's school until he had learnt Perugino's excellence, then passed to another great artist's studio and learnt his secret, and so on, until at last, able fully to use his own powers, he painted the pictures that men call 'perfect.' In other words, by the right use of freedom of choice in the selection of fellowship, he achieved freedom of self-realization.

[2] This appears in one way in the last chapter, and in another, and more explicitly, in the next.

[3] Cf. the New Testament experience of the Spirit: 'Perhaps the primary form of the experience was the sensation of freedom.' (Anderson Scott. *The Fellowship of the Spirit*, p. 87.)

XX

AUTHORITY AND FELLOWSHIP

In the last chapter the term ' freedom ' was used in contrast with ' determinism.' In another way it may be used in contrast with ' authority.' It is not easy to say anything about the latter without trenching on ground that is controversial among Christians, and this is beyond the purpose of this book, yet, as the subject of fellowship has a close connexion with the subject of authority, and a deep meaning for it, some brief discussion may be ventured. Authority, in the current political sense of the word, is a society's assertion of itself as over against its individual members. This definition may serve for the moment. To use other terms, in authority a society expresses its ' common mind.' There was a time when all societies were counted artificial, while it was reckoned natural that man should be individual. Under this concept authority also was of necessity artificial, for it is a function of society. To-day, however, it is generally allowed that man is, by ' nature,' both individual and societary. If this be so, it follows that authority, at least sometimes, is ' natural ' too. It is in accordance, that is, with the proper ' nature ' of man. The instances where authority is ' natural,' and so justifiable, are those in which the society that functions through the authority

is a living unit and not a nominal group. These societies can claim that they have a right to exercise authority, at least in some degree, over each of their members, if they be 'real' members—that is, if their unity with the society is a living unity. The belief in the 'reality' of societies, therefore, requires a doctrine of authority. So far, perhaps, most readers will agree, for the chief controversies have raged, not round the question, 'Is there such a thing as a justifiable authority?'—but round two others: 'What is the limit of a justifiable authority?' and 'What is its proper organ?' It follows, however, that authority need be no more 'external' to man than freedom. As the latter springs from his intrinsic individuality, so the former springs from his intrinsic societariness. The authority of a society is only external to any given person if he is not a member of it. The family once more gives an easy illustration. Its authority over a child, exercised through the parents, appears to be 'natural' just because the child is so evidently 'part and parcel' of the society.

It will now be obvious why in any man's 'heart' conflict may arise between freedom and authority, and why such conflict is often so painful. No man can help being both individual and societary, and in this duality there lies the possibility of conflict. No small number of tragedies, alike in 'real life' and in drama, centre in such conflict. The story of Luther's agony during the dark hours before he took his stand at Worms, may illustrate the one, Sophocles' delineation of Antigone the other. Both found it hard to defy a society of which they were a living part.

It is obvious that there may be struggle also on the side of the society. If it is wise, it too recognizes the individuality of its members as well as its own unity, and it will seek to allow scope to both. It will find room for freedom. So far, again, all will agree. But how great room shall it allow to freedom, and how far shall it claim that its authority extends? The answer varies with the nature of the society, and with the opinions of varied schools of philosophy and religion. There may be difference about the answer within any society itself. The story of 'passive resistance' to the English Education Rate gives an instance. Again, a society may think that a given member has transgressed the bound of freedom when he himself does not think so. Or an individual may belong to more than one society, and loyalty to the authority of one may conflict with loyalty to the authority of another. An artisan, for instance, may hesitate whether loyalty to his Trade Union requires that he join in a 'strike' even though his loyalty to his home urges him to go on working for its daily bread. Or one society may claim to govern in the same province of behaviour as another. For instance, the State and the Church may both prescribe the forms of religion—as when the Roman Empire fronted the early Christian community. Nor does this list exhaust the possible grounds of strife. It is clear that the facts that man is both individual and societary, that an individual and a society may disagree, that the same person often belongs to several societies at once, and that societies do not agree about the scope of their respective authority, may lead to various kinds of struggle. History

teems with examples. It is more and more being recognized that one of the chief problems of human life is the doing of justice both to that which is individual and to that which is societary in man. The problem grows out of the fact that man lives by fellowship. Has fellowship anything to say that may help to solve the problem? And in particular, does the Christian's fellowship with Christ offer any help? Some small beginning of an answer may be made.

It is obvious that conflict is less likely to occur in a society in proportion as its members 'are filled with' the same 'spirit.' Indeed, if it is allowed that societies have a 'reality' of their own, even though its nature cannot yet be clearly defined, this statement is almost tautologous. The unity of a home is of course close and peaceful if, as its children grow up, the things that each member loves and chooses are the things that are lovely and desirable also to the society as a unit. The phrase 'as its children grow up' suggests an important subsidiary remark. There is an age at which children are not yet fit 'to choose for themselves.' In other words, at that stage these members of the society are not yet 'individuals' in the full sense of the word. There cannot be *perfect* fellowship within a society—and so there cannot be an ideal society—until all its members belong to it of choice. Similarly, though some members in imperfect societies may be such by coercion, societies approach perfection in proportion as they dispense with it. If fellowship is not voluntary, it is either immature or in some other way imperfect. This has been said before,[1] but it is pertinent here

[1] pp. 159 ff, 195 f.

also. A human society can only be perfect if its members have the full freedom of true individuals.

When the purposes of a society fall within narrow limits, unity is comparatively easy to achieve. Men may agree to form a society merely to pursue some kind of sport or research or art. A Cricket Club, the Royal Geographical Society, the many local Philharmonic Societies of English towns, are instances. In effect, such societies say to would-be members, ' You may join with us if you agree with us about a definite pursuit, and if you will keep silence on other things.' Such societies, however, fill but a small part of human life taken as a whole, and they are not usually the longest-lived. Again, few try to ' live ' merely by membership in them. For the ' average ' man they fill only the overplus of time. The societies by which he chiefly ' lives ' are the home, the class, the nation, the Church. These stretch their purposes much more widely, and these are the societies that, in one way or another, endure. It would be possible to present the story of mankind as a dim, unintermitted effort to evolve a society that should embrace the whole of human life, and yet that should not contradict the true freedom of any of its many members. Such a society must needs be universal. It must include all men as well as all human life. Yet it need not supersede other societies. Rather, it would only integrate them. Each of them, if its aims are worthy, would find a proper and proportionate place within the great society itself. And, if every individual, every subsidiary society, and the great society itself, were ' filled with one spirit,' there would be no conflict

between freedom or authority, nor between the authority of one society and another. These things would not contradict but complete each other. Perfect fellowship would be the consummation of authority and freedom alike.

This is to resume what has already been said under 'the Holy Spirit.' Christians call this great society 'the Kingdom of God.' They also call it 'the Kingdom of Christ.' And this suggests another way of looking at it. It may be defined, from the Christian point of view, not only as the society of those who 'have the Spirit' of God, but as the society of those for whom Christ is Lord. In other words, the idea of the Lordship of Christ finds its ground and goal here. The specifically Christian account and definition of 'authority' follow. The ultimate authority, both for the individual Christian and for the Christian society, is Christ. 'The Father hath committed all judgement unto the Son.' Only 'in Him' can a man use his freedom aright. Only 'in Him' can liberty of choice reach its perfect climax in the liberty of self-realization. Similarly, the final definition of authority for Christians makes it the will, not of the Church, but of Christ—that is, of God. Yet Christ is Head of the Church, and organically one with it. It follows that when conflict between the individual and the society occurs in the Church, it takes a distinctive form. Both appeal to the authority of Christ. The Christian man says, 'This is what I believe to be the mind of Christ.' The Christian society rejoins, 'And this other is what I take to be His will.' The possibility of struggle, therefore, is not gone, as history sadly shows, but the

Christian way out of the difficulty inherent in the assertion both of the 'individuality' and the 'solidarity' of man appears. Other schools of thought than the Christian appeal to some vague thing called 'humanity' or 'the common human spirit,' and say that inasmuch as the individual and every true society share in this, their difference must at last lapse in agreement. The Christian is much more specific. He points to a living Person, Son of God, Son of Man, and he claims, as seen in a previous chapter, that this person is the proper 'head' of every man and of all mankind. So, as the individual and society both learn His will, 'receive His Spirit,' choose that which He chooses—and as they do these things, not because He coerces them or even because they coerce themselves, but because they love what He loves—just in proportion as this process goes on, and just in proportion as it approaches its goal, the clash of freedom with authority will cease, and each find itself to be the complement of the other. The Christian claims that the Church will at last grow into this final society—that already it has in some degree come to be that society. If this be so, it falls to the Church to illustrate more than any other society the way in which justice may be done both to freedom and authority. It has been slow to understand this duty. To-day it not only begins to understand it, but to seek to practise it. It can only be practised as both the individual Christian and the Christian society enter more and more fully into fellowship with Christ. As they do so, the struggle between 'freedom' and 'authority' settles itself, for the perfect fellowship of men with Christ carries with

it their perfect fellowship both with God and with each other. A single text of the Fourth Evangelist knits these three fellowships together,—'I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one.'[1] Such a unity is fitly named the 'glory' alike of God and men.

It may seem to some that such a unity between the individual and society must carry with it a kind of social stagnation. 'How can there be progress,' it will be asked, 'when all are agreed? Struggle may be in some ways evil, yet in others it is good. For progress has often come through the struggle of a few individuals of insight with a stolid and quiescent society.' Historically this has been so. Must it always be so? Is it not possible that both the individual and society may be set on progress and so grow continually towards the ideal? 'Yes,' it may be replied, 'but even in such a supposition, where would there be room for the individual, if there be no disagreement between him and society? You are describing the perfect society perhaps, but its perfection seems fatal to the individuality of its several members. In such a society freedom would perish for lack of exercise.' Behind this claim there lurks a certain ambiguity in the terms 'disagreement' and 'agreement.' Once more the illustration of the home may help. In a true home unity of spirit is not inconsistent with temporary variety of opinion. As one of its members 'thinks for himself,' he may chance on some discovery that he thinks of value for the common life. If so he shares his discovery with the whole little society. In

[1] John xvii. 23; cf. 1 John i. 1–4. [2] John xvii. 22.

the atmosphere of its love the discovery is examined and tested. It may survive the test entire; it may succumb entirely; it may by the test pass into something better and truer. When it has been so tested, it is accepted and used by the whole home; its benefits are universal within the society; they accrue to each member and to the whole; so progress is both individual and societary. In other words, while there is throughout no 'disagreement' in motive, there may be difference in knowledge and temporary 'disagreement' in opinion. By true fellowship, that is, unity is knit with variety, change is joined with continuity, freedom and authority supplement each other, and both the individual and society, by the use of freedom of choice, advance towards that freedom of nature which is the far-away goal of both. So the complementariness of liberty and authority would, in a society that approximated to the ideal society—and in proportion as it so approximated—be the tool of progress and not its hindrance. Its course would no longer be tedious, but speedy. And progress would be by joy instead of by pain. In the 'authority' of Christ there is no place either for coercion or friction. 'Perfect love casteth out fear'; 'We love because He first loved us.'[1]

[1] 1 John iv. 18, 19. For this chapter the writer may refer the reader also to his *Bible Doctrine of Society*, pp. 268 ff, 308 ff.

XXI

THE NATURE OF SIN

While sin was named frequently in the first part of the book, particularly in the chapter on ' The Death of Christ,' it was not there discussed separately. This is the way of the New Testament. The writers of that book mention it often in connexion with salvation, and sometimes examine the relation of the one to the other, but take hardly any other interest in it. For their purposes it was almost enough that four truths about sin could be taken as axiomatic : that sin exists, that it is serious, heinous and universal, that it occurs whenever men refuse to do the will of God, and that its result is some degree of alienation from God. It will be seen presently that one more assertion needs to be added. Other questions about sin—and, in particular, the question of its origin—hardly arise in the New Testament. Within broad limits it is true that these questions may meet with this answer or that, or may remain unanswered, without endangering any fundamental Christian doctrine. It is indeed true, too, that Christian thought cannot ascribe the origin of sin to God, but this is already implied in the assertion that it is the contradiction of His will. The Christian experience, alike in New Testament times and later, makes no doubt of the reality of sin and its

heinousness, or of escape from it through Christ, but it leaves some other questions about it open, and, in particular, it neither asserts nor implies any given account of its origin.

The one further assertion has to do with the oft-repeated truth that man is both individual and societary, and therefore with the phenomena of fellowship. Before it is adduced, however, it will be worth while to distinguish two different meanings of the term 'sin.' Sometimes it has been defined as 'lack of conformity with the will of God,' sometimes as '*wilful* lack of conformity with the *known* will of God.' Historically, the insertion or omission of the adjectives almost makes the difference between two theologies! Those who omit them approach the subject from the side of God, for they define sin as anything that comes short of or contradicts that which He wills, whether the man who commits the sin knows it or not. For instance, under this definition Abraham sinned when he practised polygamy. On the other hand, thinkers who insert the adjectives approach the subject from the side of man. They declare, with Kant, that the one sinful thing in the universe is a bad will—by which they mean a will that knowingly and intentionally sets itself against the will of God. Under this account, polygamy would not be sinful in Abraham but would be in a Christian. Sin, that is, is here made relative to human knowledge. This is the disadvantage of this definition, and it is a real disadvantage. The disadvantage of the other definition is that it dissociates sin, in some of its instances, from human freedom and responsibility. It requires that a man may

do his 'utmost and his highest' and yet sin. This disadvantage seems to be the greater of the two. Sin, therefore, is here used for the wilful contradiction of the known will of God. There seems to be no distinct and recognized term for the unknown contradiction of God's will. It would conduce to clearness if there were. Such a phrase as 'state of spiritual and moral ignorance' is too long a periphrasis. Under the definition preferred all sin is voluntary; under the other it is in part voluntary and in part involuntary. On either account it is as 'matter of fact' universal.

Is sin, then, always individual? The answer, on the definition chosen, is 'Yes.'[1] But it does not follow that sin has no societary consequences. Sin degrades the character of the man who commits it, and through him infects the character of other men too. This is so simply because human nature is societary and men live by fellowship. Everyone admits that in some way a man's character is 'influenced' by that of his fellows. It may be that in some degree this comes by heredity, and to some degree through environment; that it occurs partly by 'nature' and partly by 'nurture,' as it is put to-day. But whatever 'heredity' may be, and in whatever way 'transmission' proceeds —whatever may prove to be the explanation of the strange phenomenon called 'influence'—even if it were ultimately to prove true either that 'nature' is naught or that 'nurture' is naught,[2] yet it is fact that,

[1] Yet it does seem possible that a society, as a single whole, may deliberately refuse to do the will of God. If this be allowed, then a society can sin, along with the individuals that compose it. But this is not the point at which the chief societary phenomena about sin occur, as the sequel shows.

[2] Cf. p. 105.

because men are societary, one man's character does make a difference to other men's characters. This is, indeed, hardly more than an exposition of the meaning of the word 'fellowship.' The societariness of men carries large consequences in the realms of language, art, aesthetics, education, and so on. Indeed, there is no part of human life that escapes it. It is not possible to make an exception in the case of sin. Under the definition of 'sin' given above, it is, indeed, not possible to say that because one man sins another sins. But it is possible to say that the degradation that sin brings is 'infectious.' No man sinneth 'unto himself alone.' Every sin first degrades the sinner, and then through him degrades his fellows. There have been many millions of sins, and their manifold infections have debased mankind. Through sin there is a deep-seated, far-reaching, racial degradation. This follows from the mere societariness of man.

Happily there is a complementary truth. When a man chooses to do good, this in its degree ennobles his character, and an ennobled character, as well as a degraded one, is infectious. The societariness of man 'works both ways.' There have been many millions of good deeds done in the history of men, and their manifold influences have tended to ennoble mankind. So that in fact, through his societariness, as well as by his individual acts of choice, man is that strange blend of good and bad that we know him to be, and that each of us knows himself to be.

> There's so much good in the worst of us
> And so much bad in the best of us,
> That it ill becomes any of us
> To talk about the rest of us.

Certain old theological expressions now thrust themselves forward. They may be taken one by one. While the above account of racial degradation perhaps does justice to the truth there is in the exaggerations of Freud, it perhaps also does justice to the truth in the old doctrine of ' original sin.' In this phrase the word ' sin ' is used in the sense declined above. The phrase meant that the race, as a whole, and men, one by one, are willy-nilly far different from that which God would have them be. They ' come short of the glory of God.' Again, in the old phrase, the word ' original ' denoted what is here called racial, under the concept that Adam was the one father, the ' origin ' of all mankind. He, alone of men until the coming of Jesus, ' began life ' with a ' clean sheet.' There was in him no bias toward sin through evil ancestry and environment. Yet he sinned over the apple, and his sin ' infected ' the race. So, through their ' origin ' in Adam, all men fell below God's ideal for them. In other words, the term ' original sin ' was coined in order to sum Paul's argument in the fifth chapter of Romans. In form that argument is Rabbinic, and so archaic. To-day we do not think of all men as descendants of a man called Adam who lived in a Garden of Eden. But the argument itself is not archaic. It is exceedingly ' up to date.' For in the fifth of Romans Paul is saying in the ' thought-forms ' of the first century what the psycho-analysts, as well as others, say to-day. When he speaks of ' Adam ' he means that mankind is one great society whose members make and mar each other. He means further that sin, however and whenever it first occurred, has

spread its baleful degradation through mankind. He is facing the great and horrible consequence of human fellowship here called ' racial degradation.'

Another theological formula has usually gone with ' original sin '—' total depravity.' This phrase summed the theory that in human nature, apart from Christ, there is nothing good. It was a counter-blast to the doctrine of ' salvation by works.' The assertion above that there are such things as good deeds, and that, when men do them, they ennoble those men's own characters and pass from them to ennoble the characters of other men, seems flatly to deny ' total depravity.' Yet this is not necessarily so. The old assertion really meant that in human nature, *considered as separate from God*, there is nothing good. This is theoretically true. But, under the doctrine of the immanence of the Spirit of God laid out above, there is in life no such thing as ' human nature separate from God,' unless this be taken as a definition of the state called ' hell.' Human nature is incomplete without the Spirit of God. When we say, ' This man did a good deed,' we postulate that, at least in some degree, he has consented with that Spirit which is his birthright. There is no need again to point out that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ, and that Christ ' has a meaning ' for every man who ' does the noblest that he knows,' even if he be a heathen who has never heard of Christ. That horrible, theoretical thing, ' human nature without God,' would indeed be ' totally depraved ' if it ever occurred, but it never does occur, unless it be in hell. Short of that state, no man is quite devoid of God. His good deeds come of God's grace. Some of the

old theologians saw this, and to express it coined the phrase 'prevenient grace.'[1] They held that in every man there are at work both 'original sin' and 'prevenient grace.' This was their way of saying that both sin and goodness have societary results which are as wide as mankind. They did not always do justice, however, to the doctrine of immanence. They sometimes spoke as if the Holy Spirit were adventitious in human nature, and not integral to it. In reality, without Him, it is not 'human' at all. Paul bears witness to the truth here emphasized in his own way: 'I know,' he says, 'that in me, that is, *in my flesh*, dwelleth no good thing.' For him the 'flesh' is human nature considered apart from the Spirit of God.[2] But he goes on, 'To will is present with me.' Is not that good so far? Is not this due to the Spirit? 'But how to practise what I will, I know not.' That is, until Paul 'found Christ,' racial depravity triumphed in him over racial good. Fellowship brought more bane than blessing.

This brings us to Paul's doctrine that Christ is 'the last Adam.'[3] Here it is always to be remembered that the centre of the Apostle's thought is not Adam but Christ. He only speaks of 'the first Adam' as representative of mankind in two passages, whereas

[1] This means that the Spirit of Christ began to 'strive' with man as soon as sin befell. Cf. St. John of the Cross:

'Beneath the apple-tree
I espoused thee,
There I gave thee my hand,
And there thou wert redeemed
Where thy mother was corrupted.'

(Quoted by Dora Greenwell, *Colloquia Crucis*, p. 138.)

[2] That is, Paul uses the term 'flesh' not literally, but symbolically; see pp. 222 ff.

[3] 1 Cor. xv. 45, cf. Rom. v. 12 ff.

the thought that Christ is so representative is one of his universal axioms.[1] It is to illustrate a truth about Christ that he mentions Adam. In the latter he really personifies the 'solidarity of mankind' in its sinful issues. As seen above, Christ is the true Head of the race—Head of the race in a way that Adam was not, even on the assumption of the historicity of the story in Genesis.[2] And Paul asserts that, if and when any man 'believes' in Christ—unites himself by faith with Christ, becomes of his own choice one with Christ—then the law of solidarity begins to operate in its better and intended way. Through unity with Christ the 'grace' of God, that alone can lead any man to be what a man should be, begins to triumph over 'racial depravity.' The Spirit, having found full sway and scope in the sinless Son of Man, through Him prevails in other men. Instead of fighting a 'losing battle,' 'grace' begins to win. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' When drawn out in such discussions as this, such an account may seem theoretical and remote. But there is nothing merely theoretical in the seventh and eighth of Romans. And this is what Paul is saying there.

It will be seen that the above account of sin is shot through and through by the concept of fellowship. It presupposes the doctrines that the proper destiny, both of individual men and of mankind, is to grow perpetually, through the fellowship of the Spirit, more and more like God, and that without this

[1] Cf. pp. 185 f.
[2] See the chapters on 'The Atonement' and 'Man and Mankind.'

fellowship man is not man. It presupposes also that through man's societary nature true men serve each other in this growth. Indeed, they can do no other than so serve, if the bond of every true society is the Spirit of God. Next, the above account declares that every single sin is the refusal of the known will of God. In all fellowship every clash of wills carries with it a loosening of the fellowship between those whose wills clash. So sin issues at once in some degree of alienation between man and God. If the sin be persisted in, and if other sins be added, the degree of alienation enlarges. In other words, sin 'grieves the Spirit of God.' It is at least theoretically possible that sin may be so persistent and extensive that the alienation may be complete, and the fellowship altogether lapse. Further, here too, the societariness of man has its effect. The saying *corruptio optimi pessima est* may be applied to fellowship. Its true function, to serve as high means of mutual progress, is by sin transmuted into the base means of man's degradation. From the sins of individuals there ensues, through fellowship, a racial depravity. Every single new sin multiples the 'infection.'[1] Fellowship is then a curse instead of a blessing. Finally, through fellowship with Christ men escape from this infection, and fellowship returns to its high use. They who are 'one with Christ' through the choice of faith thereby return into the fellowship with God; gradually or swiftly, the old alienation is undone, the interrupted process of

[1] This truth does not appear in the main stream of Paul's argument in Rom. v., but it shows itself in one of the eddies—'many trespasses' (v. 16), and perhaps in another—'all sinned' (v. 12).

growth towards 'a perfect man' is resumed, and, having fellowship with the true Head of mankind, men thereby have fellowship with each other, and the process of mutual perfecting begins again. Fellowship with Christ, fellowship with men, fellowship with God, are all involved. And they are involved in a way that is consonant with the phenomena of fellowship as they occur 'outside theology.'

Some other accounts of sin may be examined in relation to this one. Men have often thought of sin as the breaking of some one of a set of rules. The Pharisee had this idea. He thought that the rules were contained in 'the Law of Moses,' and that, if he kept these rules, he was sinless and perfect. Even the Pharisee who was sincere—for there were Pharisees who were not hypocrites—thought this. It is clear that on the account given above any set of rules, however difficult, can only be a description of that which men at a given stage take to be the will of God. At that stage such a statement may be of great service—as indeed the 'law of Moses' was—but the statement that suffices at any one stage will not suffice at the next, for, as man attains to the good, he learns of the better. This is just the truth that Jesus enforced against the Pharisees in the Sermon on the Mount. 'It was said to them of old time . . . But I say unto you . . .' 'I came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets but to complete them.' The fault of the Pharisee was that he mistook the stage for the goal, and would fain condemn man to forgo progress for stagnation. Jesus said in effect, 'I tell you that a man ought to be such a man as this Sermon on the

Mount suggests, and that if he is not such a man, he sins.' No wonder that a typical Pharisee gasped 'How can these things be?' One of the characteristics of to-day is the comparative absence of the sense of sin. One reason of this is that many men have a static concept of right conduct. Their set of rules is much briefer than the Pharisees. It consists of the Ten Commandments, or rather, of the last six Commandments, with the addition of one or two such precepts as 'Thou shalt not get drunk.' If they reach this standard, they think that they do not sin! On this definition, multitudes of men don't sin. But they take a statement pertinent to the stage that many Hebrews had reached in their upward course centuries before Christ, as a final account of human behaviour. Jesus repeats to them His old sermon, 'It was said to them of old time . . . But I say . . .' 'To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.' Christians 'know' the Sermon on the Mount. Not to practise it is sin. When men 'realize' this, the sense of sin will return. They do realize it just in so far as they hold close fellowship with Christ. By the same fellowship, also, they learn ever more and more adequately what the great Sermon means for the practice of life. It is final for behaviour.[1]

The ground of the paradoxical truth that the sense of sinfulness is often most acute in the 'saint' again appears.[2] It is the man whose fellowship with God is closest who is most sensitive to anything that jars upon it. This is just a special case of a law that obtains in all fellowship. A man may be aware that

[1] Yet it is not itself a definition, see pp. 225 f. [2] Cf. pp. 79 f.

he disagrees with some slight 'acquaintance' with hardly any sense of pain. It is disagreement with his wife that breaks his heart. The lack of the sense of sin is a proof either of complete sinlessness or of indifference to God. In every instance but one it is the latter.

In contrast with the definition of sin given by the static account of human perfection, the progressive account tends to define sin as the refusal of progress, of opportunity, of growth. This is a good modern definition. Yet it can be found in Jesus' teaching. 'If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin'; 'He that hath ears, let him hear.'[1] The coming of Jesus was a matchless opportunity of progress. Persistently to refuse to use it was to 'sin against the Holy Spirit.' For a good man to refuse to be a better man is sin.[2] The theory of the evolution of personality requires this. The shortcoming of this definition is that, at least at first sight, it seems to include only 'faults of omission.' Yet to turn and go back, as well as to stand still, is a refusal of progress. Again, to go forward is not always progress, for one may often go forward in several directions. To choose the wrong line of evolution is a third form of the refusal of progress and so of sin.[3] Fellowship may perish by quarrel as well as neglect.

Similarly, to define sin as sensuality, or selfishness,

[1] John xv. 22; Matt. xiii. 43.

[2] 'Pope S. Gregory says in his book on the *Pastoral Rule*, "Whosoever has proposed to himself a greater good does an unlawful thing in subordinating it to a lesser good"' (Gasquet's *Letters of St. Bernard*, p. 126).

[3] See McDowall's *Evolution and the Need of Atonement*, *saepe*.

or as 'an anti-social act,' is not exhaustive. It is easiest to show this of the first. For instance, pride is a sin as well as drunkenness. Again, it is common to-day to equate sin and selfishness, and this is often approximately true, yet there are altruisms that are not Christian. Balzac's Le Père Goriot denied himself everything for love of his daughters. His self-denial even descended to serve their vices. Was this altruism not sinful? 'Kind-heartedly' to give a 'drink' to a drunkard may be sinful without being selfish. A man who is so closely 'one with Christ' that their wills coincide would not do such things. For he 'seeks first the Kingdom of God,' and so he seeks the perfection of his neighbour, and not primarily his happiness. Again, to define sin as 'an anti-social act,' conveys a truth about it. Men are 'members one of another,' and the wrongdoing of one harms the rest. But in Christian doctrine they are 'members one of another' through the immanent Spirit of God. Primarily the link is with God, and only secondarily with each other. No account of sin is Christian that omits God. It is by fellowship with Him that men climb slowly to perfection. There is a sense in which sin is always and only against God; it is never only against man. 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned.'

At different periods in Christian history teachers have arisen who have defined sin as a negation. Some of these teachers have been men of deep, spiritual insight and intellectual power, as Augustine. The mass of Christians has, however, always found the idea unsatisfactory. This may be because they

have not brooded sufficiently on what 'negation' or 'privation' means. Perhaps the physical phenomenon of 'polarity' gives a good metaphor. At the least, it may be said that the idea is true, whether it is sufficient or not. If a man's proper destiny be the gradual achievement of personality through fellowship with God, then the habit of sin would seem to mean the more or less gradual loss of the degree of 'personality' that the man has so far attained. Step by step he either comes to be more and more nearly that which every man is 'called' to be—a perfect man in Christ Jesus—or step by step he loses what ground he has gained, and ceases to be really 'man' at all. To refuse the 'bread of life' is to starve.

Once more, devotees of evolution like to define sin as the preference of the animal impulses to the human. They point out that the animal survives in man, and that what is not 'wrong' in animals may be 'wrong' in men. This is true, but is it the whole truth? To use a common phrase, there are several 'selves' in every 'self,' or at least the self that now is may, by its own choices, grow into any one of several different 'selves.' The statement has a certain vagueness about it, but this is because just here psychologists have not yet settled their differences. The statement is perhaps accurate enough for the present purpose. In every human life a kind of struggle goes on between these several 'selves.' It would be hard to say how many there are. Paul simplifies psychology by talking of two. He calls them 'the flesh' and 'the spirit.' Both the general

teaching of the New Testament about the 'world of matter' and an exact exegesis of the relevant Pauline passages themselves, forbid us to take the first of these terms literally. It was the handiest symbol for what Paul meant. For him 'the flesh' and 'the spirit' are 'human nature on its lower side' and 'human nature on its higher side,' to use conveniently vague modern expressions for something that is not even yet scientifically definable. In a true man the 'spirit' brings the 'flesh' into subjection; in men who fail to be true men, the 'flesh' dominates the 'spirit.' But the right word is 'subjection' or 'sub-mission,' not 'abolition.' Paul does not propose to destroy his 'lower self' but to 'bring it into subjection.' This suggests yet another definition of sin—sin is disproportion. This, again, is not exhaustive, but it covers much of the ground. In every man there are several 'selves,' and each of them has a fit place in a true human life, but in a given order and organism. The 'animal impulses' of the evolutionists form one of these 'selves.' This has its place in true life, but its fit place is as servant, not master. To use another of Paul's vigorous metaphors, the higher 'self,' if need be, must 'box' with the 'body' and 'give it a black eye.'[2] Among other things, man is set to order his 'selves' aright—his 'animal self,' his aesthetic self, his commercial 'self,' and so on through a whole gamut, whose descriptive terms are as yet rather practical than scientific. And willingly

[1] Cf. Anderson Scott's paraphrase of Rom. viii. 6: 'To take the material point of view is death; to take the spiritual point of view is life and peace' (*The Fellowship of the Spirit*, p. 32).

[2] 1 Cor. ix. 26 f.

to put good things in the wrong order is sin.[1] The error may not be about the 'animal self' at all, or it may be, for this is only one of several parties 'in the case.' Again, even unwittingly to go astray in the proper ordering of life is disastrous. As seen above, some would call this sin. Here, again, the societariness of man aids or mars us. There may be evil in the wrong ordering of things that 'in themselves' are all good, and this habit may pass from man to man.[2] How shall a man order his life aright? Once more the Christian concept of fellowship emerges. We grow like those with whom we share a common life in the dear intimacy of love. He who holds fellowship with Christ grows like Him. He passes 'from glory unto glory into the same image.' And he who grows like the perfect Man attains thereby a perfect proportion in life. Here we touch on the highest of the arts, the art of life. No one can perfectly practise any art by rule. For instance, none can attain the fit behaviour that becomes a 'gentleman' by precept. 'Gentlemanliness' springs out of the subconsciousness, and the requisite kind of subconsciousness 'comes' through willing fellowship with 'gentlefolk.' So, through fellowship with Jesus, 'we all attain unto a perfect man, the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ.' Spiritually as well as physically, the

[1] This is where the sin of giving Sunday to sport comes in. Sport is good and worship is good, but the second is better than the first; so to forgo worship for sport is sin. Theoretically, indeed, Sunday sportsmen may worship at 'some other time'; practically, they don't. If a man is set upon worship, he finds that one of the best ways to practise it is to join with other men in it—that is, to go to Church on Sunday. Fellowship helps here, as everywhere else. See the writer's *Bible Doctrine of Wealth and Work*, pp. 236 ff.

[2] This is one of the places where Tennant's account of sin needs supplementing.

'perfect' man is the 'well-proportioned' man. Christ's 'stature' is not mere bulk.[1]

It will have been noticed that the chosen definition of sin—the contradiction of God's known will, with its consequent alienation—is really negative, and that all the positive definitions have been found inadequate. The reason is clear. Man can only know fully what contradicts God's will when he fully knows what that will is. The idealistic element in the philosophy that underlies this study requires that the ideal for man is not yet fully known. 'It does not yet appear what we shall be.' By fellowship with Christ we not only gradually attain to something 'higher,' but, as we attain it, something yet higher 'swims within our ken.' Consequently the definitions both of righteousness and of sin are relative to our knowledge at each stage.[2] It may seem that the references to the Sermon on the Mount above require that it be a definition of righteousness, and therefore, by implication, of sin. But the truth is that the Sermon is not a definition. All attempts to make it one fail. It is the portrayal of a motive. The motive is the love of God unto the service of man. In other words, it is the motive whose counterpart is fellowship with God and through Him with men. A motive may be constant through a gradually evolving process. Is not this so, for instance, in the story of any true marriage? After forty years a true husband and a true wife have reached a goal

[1] Under this definition of 'disproportion' there falls, not only the evolutionist's account of 'animal impulse,' but the psycho-analyst's allied account of 'repressed complexes.' In it, too, men 'go wrong' when they put 'innocent' things in wrong relation to each other. And here again societariness plays a great part, as well as individuality.

[2] Cf. p. 210.

of which they were only dimly aware on their wedding-day, yet through all the unforeseen process the one motive has guided unerringly forward. Exposition has not yet exhausted the Sermon on the Mount. It will as easily do so as it will exhaust the exposition of the Man who portrayed Himself in it! To be like Christ is perfection, to be knowingly unlike Him is sin. But who yet has exhausted His character? Who yet has explored it? Every 'specialist' in every science assumes that his science is inexhaustible. Yet the phenomena are there all the time. The astronomer never expects to have no more to say about light, nor the botanist to spell out the last word about roses, nor the chemist to exhaust the mysteries of 'matter'—yet the star and the rose and matter are before them all the time. How much more shall this be so when we pass from God's creatures to His Son! Christ is ours all the time, and our high calling is by fellowship to be like Him. Yet we cannot exhaustively define Him. In consequence, we cannot exhaustively define either His fellowship or its contradiction. The definition of sin continually extends as we learn to know God better, for sin is the opposite of God.

XXII

PRAYER

THREE definitions of prayer may be distinguished. The word may be used in the wide sense of all fellowship with God ; it may mean conscious fellowship with God ; it may be restricted to petition, to man's asking some gift from God. While it is not possible to draw an exact line between these three meanings, inasmuch as one merges insensibly into another, in the main the first meaning is here examined first, then the second, and then the third. It is clear that if the word be used in the first and widest sense, almost the whole of the first part of this book was by implication a discussion of prayer, for it was a discussion of fellowship.[1]

In its widest sense prayer is the contrary of sin, for sin has been defined as the interruption of the fellowship of man with God. Again, in this widest sense prayer is co-extensive with true human life. This follows from the account of human nature given above. It has been said that no man is true man unless he holds fellowship with the Son of Man ; again, it has been said that the Spirit of God is ' integral ' to human nature—and this means that man can only live as he

[1] And of a fellowship describable either as with God or with Christ. This point is not taken again in the present chapter.

ought to live, and be what he ought to be, if he is in fellowship with God. ' To know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent,' is ' life eternal ' and also prayer. Further, this fellowship, or life, or prayer—for the three words denote three aspects of one experience—is, or ought to be, continuous. Man's life ought not to be cut up into sections, of one of which it may be said ' God is here,' and of the next, ' God is not here.' In other words, the doctrine of prayer, at its widest, is just the doctrine of the Spirit over again.

But how can fellowship be continuous? Must not men attend to other things beside God? Was not Paul guilty of hyperbole when he said, ' Pray without ceasing '? The easiest answer to such questions is to ask another: Was not Jesus' fellowship with the Father continuous? Or was it secluded to the seasons when He left the busy life of men and attended solely to God? The answer is plain. Jesus was in fellowship with God, not only when He ' went into the mountain to pray,' but when He was working ' signs,' when He was teaching the people, when He was eating His ' daily bread ' with the Twelve, when He was busy with a carpenter's hammer. In the light of modern psychology it is not difficult to find a partial parallel. There are ' earthly ' fellowships that are continuous. The writer was once asked, in the midst of a group of people who, in discussing the Christian experience, had used frequently the word ' subconscious,' ' What is this subconscious? ' The questioner was an intelligent Christian tradesman, whose ill fortune it was to have had no more education than was usually given to

boys of 'the working class' sixty years ago. It seemed easier to answer by way of illustration than definition. 'Supposing your wife were away from home, would you not be all the while conscious of some difference, even when you were not thinking of her—when you were busy with customers in the shop, say?' 'Yes, I should.' 'That is the subconscious.' The illustration built upon the fact that fellowship between husband and wife is often continuous. We have always been vaguely aware that this is so, but the examination of the subconscious begins to show how it may be so. Fellowship may persist even when it is not 'above the threshold of consciousness.' Prayer, in its widest sense, permeates true life. The old Roman poet cried, 'I count nothing human alien to myself.' This is God's cry. If all true life is by fellowship with Him, then all true life is by prayer. In this, its widest sense, prayer is life.[1]

Here, however, another of the phenomena of fellowship intrudes. It underlies such sayings as 'Keep your friendships in repair,' and 'Out of sight, out of mind.' Fellowship tends to die if it be merely subconscious. In other words, it can only be continuous if its subconscious intervals be sustained and reinforced by conscious intervals. A true husband and wife seek—or if need be, make—opportunities of direct fellowship, lest their subconscious fellowship should grow feeble and at length lapse. Friends who never meet, and never write, tend to get 'out of touch.' In subconscious fellowship the will is more or less dormant;

[1] Cf. Francis Thompson:

'Does the fish soar to find the ocean?
The eagle plunge to find the air?'

in conscious fellowship it is active. Fellowship cannot be continuous and deep without frequent reinforcement by the will. Man must again and again 'attend' to God, or his fellowship with God will grow feeble and at last lapse. The first definition of prayer given above leads therefore to the second—*conscious* fellowship with God. It is only by prayer in this second sense that prayer in the first can be maintained. To take a familiar instance, they who really 'worship' on Sunday keep most easily 'in touch with God' all the week.

This suggests yet another phenomenon of fellowship. It may be either mediate or immediate.[1] Or rather, if we confine ourselves for the moment to fellowship among men, it may be more or less dependent on some means or medium. The commonest medium of human fellowship is speech. Through a given series of articulate sounds the mind of one man holds fellowship with the mind of another man. A second common medium of fellowship is writing and printing. In these one man holds fellowship with another man through a given series of visible marks. A third way is by looks. Here the series of symbols or media is much less easy to codify than in the preceding two instances, and so the language of looks can only be used to any great extent by those who already 'know each other well,' but to a wife or a dear friend the flicker of an eyelid or the shade of an expression may convey a great deal. Touches may also be media of fellowship, as in the hand-shake and the kiss of Europe or the nose-rubbing

[1] The word 'immediate' is here used in its older and more literal sense 'without anything intermediate.'

of the South Seas. It will be noticed that in all these instances the medium or symbol through which fellowship is held is of a material kind. A spoken word, for example, is a series of air-vibrations that strike the ear-drum. Even in the instance of the glance there are the material media of the eyeball whose 'look' is the glance, and of the light that conveys it from one eye to the other. There can be no fellowship by glances in the dark! It is a moot question whether there is such a thing as immediate fellowship among men, that is, fellowship without any media at all. Some exponents of 'telepathy' suggest that there is, but this is still unproved. Yet it is clear that, in proportion as fellowship is closer, media are less needed. Every one of us knows that he can convey by six syllables to an intimate what he can only explain to a stranger in many words. It is the 'nearest and dearest' who most quickly 'understand' and least often 'misunderstand.' Who would trust himself to communicate much by looks with a complete stranger? He may do it often, in the presence of oblivious strangers, with his wife! There seems to be a law in human fellowship that the closer it is, the more nearly it can dispense with media or symbols, even though it may never succeed in escaping them altogether. Those who believe that in the Hereafter there is no place for the 'body' or the 'material world' at all, presumably believe that in that realm fellowship will be altogether immediate, for here media are all 'material.'

Apart from the Hereafter, however, it is doubtful whether men would abolish media of fellowship even

if they could.[1] There are people whose fellowship is so close that they could dispense with hand-shakes or kisses. Do they? There is a well-known story of Dr. Dale which tells that, when he was visiting Australia, he was asked questions about his church in Birmingham, and that, among other things, he said, 'I know they love me, but they do not often tell me so.' He longed for the symbol along with the fellowship. It seems that a perfect fellowship among men is of a paradoxical kind. It approaches the point where symbol is unnecessary, yet it loves the symbol. Some would even say that, just in proportion as it nears perfection, it feeds on the symbol that it seems so slightly to need! Men, at least 'in this present,' are both body and soul, and in the fellowship of men both play a part.

God, however, has no body. Is fellowship for Him, then, altogether immediate? If He alone be considered, the answer seems to be 'yes.' At least, some hold that the one perfect instance of fellowship —to which all others will for ever approximate—is the fellowship that exists within the Trinity, and it is clear that this is wholly immediate. But, when the fellowship that obtains between God and man is considered, another question emerges. If the fellowship proper to God be immediate, and the fellowship proper to man be mediate, which shall fellowship between God and man be? The answer of experience is that it is both. The literature of the poetry

[1] There is an exquisite story in the *Little Flowers of St. Francis* (ch. xxxiv.) which tells how King Louis of France came to visit Brother Giles, and how the two saints held long fellowship without either speaking a word. Yet even here there was the embrace and the kiss, and it is implied that the two found a closer fellowship because they saw each other.

of immanence illustrates mediate fellowship between God and man. At the term 'immanence' Englishmen turn at once to Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*. To that great poet God spoke continually through 'nature,' and Wordsworth is the priest of a great company of others to whom 'nature' is a voice of God. Many, again, hear God in music, many in history, many in the Bible. To use now the pertinent word, there are those to whom all things are 'sacramental,' in the wider sense of the term. The narrower sense, again, gives a high Christian instance. Almost all Christians, in spite of their disagreement in the exposition of what the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is, agree that through its symbols Christ holds fellowship with them and they with Christ. Again, to multitudes of men Christ has spoken through preaching. There is mediate fellowship between God and man.

But is there not also immediate? Another poet has given to the English people a quotation that is almost as common as that from *Tintern Abbey*:

> Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
> Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.[1]

The mystic—and it is more and more coming to be seen that there is a mystical element in all true religion—the mystic claims that he has immediate fellowship with God. In the old sense of the word, indeed, the 'mystic' claimed that there was no other fellowship with God, or that at most other fellowship was but crude and preparatory, and that its fate was to perish

[1] Tennyson, *The Higher Pantheism*.

in the perfect fellowship that is immediate. On the other hand, there have been 'sacramentalists' who have made the contrary claim. They have said that the 'mystical' fellowship with God was an illusion, and they have pointed to the extreme experiences of 'mystical trance' as the literally inane. If we are to appeal to normal experience, the truth seems to be that in all fellowship with God there are both 'mystical' and 'sacramental' elements, and that, while to some the former and to others the latter element is the more helpful, yet both are needed. This means that God, having made man both soul and body, suits His fellowship with man to the creature that He has made. Something more will be said of the Christian doctrine of the 'world of things' in a later chapter. The very poem of Tennyson's, from which the familiar lines have just been quoted, illustrates the duality of fellowship here sustained. It protests that just because the 'material' universe is 'the vision of Him who reigns,' man may speak with God 'Spirit with Spirit.' Prayer, as conscious fellowship with God, may use many media or none. Or rather it may at once both use and not use them. The everyday prayers of multitudes are in part articulated in words, and yet along with the articulate there is all the while something 'that cannot be uttered.' Similarly, the response of God may sometimes come through a sunset, a flower, or a child, but at least as often it is altogether direct and 'mystical.'

If now we pass to the third, narrowest and commonest meaning of the word 'prayer'—the asking of gifts from God, or in one word 'petition'—a principal

thing to notice is the relation between it and the first meaning, under which prayer was defined as the whole fellowship of man with God. In the third sense, prayer is far too often thought of as parallel to the casual asking of a beggar in the street from a casual stranger, and the response of God is far too often set alongside the casual gift of such a casual passer-by. Those who give even a moment's thought to the subject know that this sort of asking and giving are the least satisfactory of all. Is God's gift, then, likely to be of this sort? Even in this kind of asking, however, the beggar appeals to the stranger on the ground of some meagre residuum of fellowship. At least both are men, and the one will therefore have some sympathy with the other! Yet, if the stranger's sympathy be more than otiose, and just in proportion as it is intense, he will seek to give *aright* to the beggar. This means that he will seek to 'know more about him,' seek to understand his real need, try to learn how best he may help him, and end by offering him help, not according to the manner of his asking, but according to the nature of his need. This, of course, means the 'taking of trouble.' It may also mean that instead of offering the beggar twopence, the sympathizer will find him work, or carry food to his children, or endeavour to wean him from an idle and dissolute life. In other words, before one man can answer another man's petition aright, even though it is only a petition for alms, he must 'enter into fellowship with him,' and give according to the discoveries of that fellowship. True gift is always by fellowship. If the beggar refuse to allow his would-be friend to help

him in this way, the latter can do nothing really helpful for him, for any so-called ' gift ' without the insight of fellowship, may easily be no true ' gift ' at all. Further, it is plain that the process is mutual. If the stranger ' enters into fellowship ' with the beggar, the beggar in turn ' enters into fellowship with ' his would-be friend. It is only in proportion as he does so that that friend's ' gifts ' are a real benefit. Indeed, often the friend's fellowship itself is his crowning gift. Through his proffered friendship chiefly, the rescued derelict of the street finds himself again a man. True gift is a ' function ' of fellowship.

While this is found to be so, upon examination, in the instance of the beggar in the street, it is obviously so in the more usual and higher human instances. The home, here again, gives the clearest example. A child does not ask from his father either with the hesitation of one kind of beggar, or with the effrontery of another kind. Both words are out of place. A child asks just because he is a child. In other words, as his father and he share the common fellowship of home, and stand in a given relation within it, it is ' naturally ' his part to ask, and as ' naturally ' his father's part to give. Petition, that is, is here too a part of fellowship. It is justifiable and explicable in any given instance in its relation to the fellowship in which it inheres. The ways in which a child asks from its father, a wife from her husband, and a sister from her brother, in the same home, all differ in nature, just because the types of fellowship that are the background of the several requests, vary too. God is the Christian's Father. This statement describes the nature of their

fellowship, and it describes therefore the nature of their asking and giving.

The example of the home will take us further. As a child 'grows up,' he 'enters' more and more fully into the fellowship of the home, and, as he does so, there come to be some things that he would not think of asking, some things that he will ask doubtfully, and some things that he will ask confidently. He will classify these kinds of things 'instinctively,' that is, he will know what to ask and how to ask because of his experience of the fellowship of his father. If that father is imperfect, as all human fathers are, the child may learn, through fellowship with him, that there are things that 'it is no use asking' though they would really be good for him, even as he may learn that there are things that he may 'ask and have' though they are not really 'good for him.' Or again, the child may gradually learn that there are requests he must not make because his father is too poor to grant them. And many and many a time he will ask for one thing quite honestly, and his wiser father will supply the need behind the request by giving him another. Often, too, the father will discern a need of which the child is not even aware, and before he asks, he has! Yet his need really made a request, and the father heard it because of fellowship. It is easy to 'carry across' these phenomena, rid of their imperfections, to the fellowship of men with God. There is no need to do so item by item. A man may refuse the fellowship of God. Then he has no claim to ask anything, and there is no promise that a request of his will be granted. He has no *locus standi*, for legitimate petition presupposes

that the parties have 'something in common.' On the other hand, God refuses no man's fellowship. Let but a prodigal cry, 'I will arise and go to my Father,' and his fellowship with God has begun. And straightway God begins to give and he to receive. Sometimes he 'asks amiss,' and then his Father answers his need rather than his actual request. But gradually, through his fellowship with his Father, his requests will take the right form. Less and less will his petitions go astray. More and more he will know what things not to ask; more and more he will ask some gifts with an 'if Thou wilt,' for he will have begun to know the depths of his own ignorance and of his Father's wisdom; more and more he will ask some things confidently, because he knows that his Father waits and longs to give them. Petition is a function of fellowship.

If now it be asked what sort of requests will fall in the three several classes, it is not possible to lay down any rigid rule, for the 'relations' of the great Father to each of His children have their own 'idiosyncrasy,' in the true sense of the word. But one or two general remarks may be made. Men who have begun to enjoy the fellowship of God will not ask anything that they know to be wrong. Historians tell us that in the Middle Ages there were seaside villages where men as yet saw no wrong in 'wrecking,' and they add that there were instances of the villagers gathering in Church to pray, 'Oh Lord, send us plenty of wreckage!' With a wider knowledge of God such petitions die. And indeed few Christians find that they can ask for any 'material' gift without an implicit or explicit 'if Thou wilt,' for what man knows that this or that 'thing' will be a

true boon? Paul says that he three times asked God to remove his 'thorn in the flesh,' but that at last he learnt that it was better for him that it should remain. Surely he added 'if Thou wilt' to each request. This is one of the places where Tindall's famous challenge limps. He asked that in a hospital ward the patients on one side of the ward should for a given period pray for recovery, and that those on the other side should let God alone, and that the truth or falsity of prayer should be judged by the results. As if any Christian would pray unreservedly for recovery! He knows, at least with very rare exceptions, that it may be his Father's will that he go 'to be with Christ, which is very far better.' Yet there are requests that a Christian will make unreservedly. He will ask confidently for what are called 'spiritual gifts,' for he knows that God wills and longs to give him these. Christians do ask for purity of heart, and patience, and moral courage, and many another such gift, and if in this realm the 'average' Christian be compared with the 'average' non-Christian, there can be no doubt of the issue. God does answer prayer.

Certain words of Jesus about prayer may now be recalled. We read more than once that He told His disciples that they should receive anything that they asked 'believing.' What did He mean? It is not impossible that the promise was made for what logicians call a given 'universe of discourse.' Seemingly universal statements are often limited by the subject with which the speaker or writer deals. An easy example is the common remark, 'Every one knows that.' It hardly ever, or even never, really means

' every one '—the Londoner and the Kamschatkan, the patriarch and the babe, the sane and the insane. The context limits it. Some think that, in the texts in question, Jesus meant that the disciple is sure to receive ' *spiritual* ' gifts, if he asks them, inasmuch as these formed the ' universe of discourse ' with which the speaker was dealing. But, apart from this, the promises were not made to all men. They were made to ' disciples,' to ' believers,' to those who had learnt to ask ' in My name ' (which for men of Hebrew training meant much the same as ' in My spirit '). Or, to use the phrase of the Fourth Gospel, what Jesus said was, ' If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.' In other words, Jesus' promises of sure response were expressly made to those who sought and loved His fellowship, and who found in Him fellowship with God. In many a noble Christian home there comes a time when a father can say to a son who ' has drunk of his spirit,' ' Ask anything you like.' For he knows that through the fellowship of home the son has become such an one that he will not ' ask amiss,' and that, if he doubts, he will seek guidance from the familiar fellowship. Jesus' own story gives instances. Once we hear Him saying, ' Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.' But in Gethsemane He was heard to gasp, ' If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' And then presently, ' Thy will be done.' Fellowship is a sea of which petition is a wave.

Someone will now raise the question, ' But why should I ask for blessings, such as these spiritual ones,

if, as you say, God is waiting and longing to give them? Will not a good Father give me all I need without my asking?' The question brings out another truth about the relation of fellowship and gift. Gift is mutual; there cannot be a giving and a receiving unless there is willingness on both sides, and this willingness too is a function of fellowship. This is clearest of 'spiritual' gifts. In human life, one can only teach another such a thing as humility if the two have fellowship one with another, and if, on the basis of this fellowship, the one seek to teach and the other to learn—with a 'teaching' and a 'learning' that are far more than mere explanation and understanding. For such gifts the one must ask and the other must respond. It is indeed true that there need not always be set and articulate asking, but none the less the desire and the effective request must be there. It is easy once more, when the difficulty is put in terms of fellowship, to transfer the truth into the realm of religion. If a proud man does not wish to be humble, even Christ teaches him humility in vain. There must be some desire to 'learn,' and some pursuit of fellowship in order to 'learn,' or no such gift can be given. Gift cannot be gift unless there be receiving; even God cannot—or will not, for in Him the two are one—thrust a 'spiritual' gift upon an unwilling man. There is no use in pouring water on a shut mouth. Here, again, it is true that the mere articulation of the desire is not necessary that God may give. Desire may be entirely 'subjective,' as the phrase goes. For most Christians to put petitions in words is a necessity, lest the mind merely wander;

for many it is serviceable, as helping to intensify and maintain the desire; yet there are Christians who can wait upon God without speech, and the 'saints,' at the height of their agony after 'spiritual' gifts, may struggle with 'groanings that cannot be uttered.' While words help men, the great Father does not need them. But even He cannot give unless, in the wide and true sense of the word, a man ask. This is clear of 'spiritual' gifts. Gift, to be consummated, requires the active consent of both parties. There cannot be blessing unless there be prayer.[1]

A little further thought shows that this is really true of other gifts too. For no gift of a 'material' sort is all that gift should be unless it be 'rightly used.' If a would-be friend give a shilling to a starving man, it is not just that he may eat. It is that, in a minute way, he may help him to be what a man ought to be. If the starveling, instead of using the shilling to buy food, use it to get drunk, he has not 'received' that which the donor meant to give. He does not receive this unless he himself really wants to do so. Even if he eats food under the eye of the giver, he may misuse the manhood that it was meant to serve. Gift and coercion are incompatible. In an incomplete way there may indeed be gift without the exercise of choice on both sides, as when one gives clothes to an infant. But for gift between persons to be all it

[1] There is a partial exception to this law in the spiritual blessings that come to little children, without their choice, both from the spirit of their earthly home and the Spirit of their Heavenly Father. But this is because they are not yet fully persons. The process does indeed extend into later years, for men only slowly become fully 'personal' and so really 'free.' But, just in proportion as men attain personality and liberty, the above law holds. A human being can say 'I will' and 'I won't' to God as soon as he can say it to anyone else. Cf. pp. 195 f.

ought to be, there must be choice on both sides ; the one must choose to give, and the other to receive the same thing ; this thing is never really anything ' outward,' but always some service that the outward may render to a ' person ' ; for such a consummation of gift some degree of fellowship is needed ; and the fellowship shows itself in asking, whether articulate or inarticulate, on the one side, and giving on the other. God does indeed ' make His sun to rise on the evil and the good,' but the former do not really ' receive ' His gift, for the sunshine is only its medium—its coinage, as it were. The evil man takes the coin, but he spends it on something other than that which God meant to give through it. He has not really ' received.' ' Ask,' said Jesus, ' and ye shall receive.' If the meaning of ' ask ' be explored, it turns out that there can be no free receiving without asking. God gives men opportunities ' whether they ask or not,' but an opportunity is by nature an incomplete thing. Does a great picture fill a man's mind with beauty, whether he looks at it or not ?

The term ' subjective ' has been used above. When used of prayer it has at least two senses. Sometimes the remark, ' Prayer is altogether subjective,' means that in prayer only one person is concerned at all—in other words, that God has nothing to do with it. In this sense of the word, ' prayer ' reduces to meditation, or to auto-suggestion, and it would be well to call it by one of these names. It means, of course, that the whole postulate of Christianity, and of most other religions, that men can and do hold fellowship with God, is an error. This is not the place to discuss

that subject. In the other use of the word 'subjective' it is allowed that there is fellowship in prayer, that two persons are involved, that God does take a part as well as man; but it is claimed that the only 'difference' made is in man, that in prayer he consents to receive 'what God is all the time giving,' that prayer makes no 'difference' in what God does.

This doctrine claims to meet a certain difficulty. The latter has been stated in various ways. In the days when it was assumed that creation was complete 'a long time ago,' and that nothing has happened since but the 'evolution' of what was all the time 'involved' in 'nature,' the objection ran: 'It is impossible that what man does *now* can alter what God did *then*. The "course of things" was long ago settled; how should any one of the millions of men's prayers, or all the millions, alter what is already fixed and certain? All that men at most can do is to consent to receive the blessings that God long since "planted" in the universe.' The experience of Christians always rejected this argument, but, as argument, it seemed for a while invulnerable. To-day, however, it is not so often heard. For, in the first place, such ideas as 'immanence,' and 'epigenesis,' and 'continuous creation,' have discounted the old idea that 'all things' were 'settled' long ago, and that evolution only unfolds what has all along 'been there.' To a theist, these new terms mean that God is at work all the time, that He is ever creating, and under this notion the old objection simply lapses. Once more Christian experience has proved more reliable than its critics. And there is to-day another

and a deeper answer. It is an old contention of theology that God 'transcends' time. It is obvious that the whole objection proceeds on the assumption that He is bound by it—that for Him there is a past and a present and a future. To-day science begins to suggest that time, as well as space, is a thing 'relative' to the human mind, and that, apart from each man's mind in turn, it has no existence! Of course no one can conceive how this may be, but then the inconceivable is allowed in science! The old form of the objection is gone.

To-day the problem arises rather from the difficulty of supposing that anything that such a being as man may do or wish can 'make any difference' to such an one as God. 'Is He not love?' it is asked; 'How can my asking affect His giving? Will He love me more for my asking?' And analogies are sought from physical nature. God's love is said to be like the sunlight; this is streaming all the while upon the window; prayer is to draw up the blind and let it in. Or God's love is like a great river of pure water; prayer is to stoop and drink. So the only 'difference' that occurs is in man. There is no change in God or in what He does. In this sense prayer is said to be 'subjective' only.

It is significant that these analogies are drawn from *physical* nature. If the sun and the river were personal, the comparison would not serve. When the Prodigal came home, did it 'make no difference' to the father? At least it made a difference to his feelings. Did it make no difference to his acts? Could he not do for his son now many things that he could

not do while he was in the 'far country'? The fact is that in the relation of persons called 'fellowship,' it is impossible to conceive of a 'difference' occurring in one of those who share it without some 'difference' ensuing for the other. It is true that the *motive* of the Prodigal's father was constant throughout. He loved his son all the time. But the change in his son turned his love from sorrow into joy, and from reluctant inaction into glad flood. Further, was even this all? Did not the motive itself grow stronger? Does not love feed on the response of love? Is it not the common discovery of parents that there is a paradox in love—that, while they love a new-born child with all their hearts, they love him more still if for twenty years he responds to love? It is not possible to make any assertions about the mysterious nature of God that are not difficult to limited minds. Here all that we can do is to choose between difficulties. But is it a more noble concept of God to compare Him to a father or a river? When He holds fellowship with His children, has it no bliss for Him? Is He the altogether apathetic? There are difficulties in claiming that the response of men to His fellowship 'makes a difference' to Him, but surely there are greater difficulties in saying that it does not. If God loves, it must 'make a difference' to Him whether He is loved in turn. A sun may treat a million persons all alike, but a Father cannot. The gifts of fellowship are mutually conditioned.

A further remark may be made. Some who urge this difficulty about the impossibility of a man's act 'making any difference' to God, do not seem to grasp

its consequences. It is fatal to freedom. For every free act 'makes a difference' in God's universe. Is He indifferent to these changes? If not, then every free act 'makes a difference' to Him. It may prove at last that the doctrine of immanence requires that even in 'nature' God responds differently to man's different uses of freedom. At the least no Christian can believe that God is 'indifferent' to the way in which man employs his liberty to 'alter' the universe of God. If this were so, there would have been no Calvary. God is not indifferent to sin. In reality, the belief that in prayer men do 'influence' God is only the final instance of the belief in human freedom. Prayer and freedom stand or fall together. It has been seen above that on the subject of freedom one escape for Christian thought is by antinomy—by asserting at once the reality of freedom and the sovereignty of God.[1] This antinomy may be applied to prayer. It will then take the form of the assertion that God both changes and does not change. If any find this too hard a creed,[2] he must choose between the limbs of the antinomy, and it is by the choice of the earlier limb that he will think the more nobly of God.

So far prayer has been considered almost entirely as an individual act or habit. It may, of course, also be societary. The solidarity of men finds scope here also. Much of what has been said above about individual prayer may be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to corporate prayer. Here, again, for instance, the

[1] pp. 190 ff.

[2] Though there is a hint of it even in human personality, for the 'I' in man both changes and does not change.

word ' prayer ' may be used with a wider connotation or a narrower. The commonest kind of ' corporate prayer ' is ' public worship.' In it there is, or ought to be, place found, not only for petition, but for adoration, praise, thanksgiving, confession, intercession, vow, and gift. In it too there is the recognition of the twofold nature of fellowship. At least in theory, God speaks to the worshippers as well as the worshippers to God. He may do this, mediately, through the reading of Scripture, the music of liturgy, the preaching of sermon, the Sacramental elements. It is just the Christian minister's claim to ' speak for ' God that distinguishes him from other public speakers. Yet even in ' public worship ' there is not always need that fellowship use media. It may be immediate. The experience of the Society of Friends in the high use of ' silent prayer ' is passing to other Christians. Its use is as difficult as it is high. Probably it can only be frequently and successfully used in comparatively small companies of very earnest Christians. To attempt its use often in ' great congregations ' is to invite the plague of ' wandering thoughts.' Yet there is

> The speechless awe that dares not move,
> And all the silent heaven of love.

A further remark may be made. Christian teachers have always insisted that for a vigorous Christian life both private and public prayer are needed. They have often been met by the challenge, ' Why so ? Cannot God speak to the individual as well as to the multitude ? Cannot I hear His voice as clearly and as well upon my knees at home or amid the silences and voices of

nature, as in Church?' This challenge has usually been answered by insisting that private and public prayer have each a distinctive contribution to make to the Christian life, and that neither can supply the contribution distinctive of the other. But then a definition of these two distinctions is demanded, and this demand has not always been met. The reason now appears. As has so often been said above, modern psychology recognizes that societies, like individuals, have a reality and a life of their own, but it is as yet unable to define exactly what this reality and this life are, and particularly to distinguish them from the reality and life of the individuals that compose the societies. The difficulty of the Christian teacher in distinguishing the benefits of private and public prayer respectively, is clearly just one instance of this wider difficulty. The solution of the wider difficulty will no doubt carry with it the solution of the narrower. Meanwhile the psychology of to-day admits, or rather asserts, that the Christian teacher has been right in claiming always that there is in 'public worship' something distinctive, which 'private worship' cannot give. This only means once more that man is both individual and societary.

The mention of the societary nature of man suggests another kind of prayer—intercession. Men have fellowship with each other, as well as with God. Christianity teaches that they have true fellowship with one another 'in God,' as has been seen already. If this be so, it is but 'natural' that, in their fellowship with the one Father, brothers should remember each other, and that in that fellowship a brother who is

'at home with God' should remember another who has 'gone astray.' Christians, therefore, have usually, just in proportion to the depth of their Christianity, been earnest and frequent in intercession. Yet it is just here that the difficulties of prayer are most acute. If it is hard to think that a man's prayer can 'make any difference' in God's treatment of the man himself, it is harder still to think that his prayer will 'make a difference' in God's treatment of another man. Will God do more for my neighbour because I ask Him, and will He do less for my neighbour if I do not ask Him? Will He do more for Chinamen if Englishmen pray for China, and will He do less for Chinamen if Englishmen do not so pray? Here the problems of prayer culminate.

There is as yet no complete answer, but some things may be said. First, there is a very large body of evidence that God does answer prayers for other people, and it is not scientific, or even honest, to refuse to examine and accept evidence just because it is inexplicable. Second, it is to be admitted that here prayers even for 'spiritual gifts' are not always answered. In intercession, not only the will of the Father and of the interceding Christian are involved, but a third will, that of the man for whom intercession is offered. And, while God can and does 'influence' the minds of men through the Holy Spirit, there are limits to that 'influence,' for God has given to every man a degree of freedom, and He does not now and then break it down. The third will may foil intercession. Again, the modern suggestion that intercession is only an instance of the obscure phenomenon called

' telepathy ' does less than justice to the claim of Christian experience. It excludes God from the process. If this is all that intercession means, the case is parallel to the reduction of prayer for oneself to auto-suggestion, and the honest way would be to reject the word ' intercession ' in favour of ' telepathy.' Fourthly and chiefly, the difficulty in intercession is only a peculiarly clear example of a much wider difficulty. God, who is ' Our Father in Heaven ' and altogether Holy Love, has made a universe in which the acts of one man ' make a difference,' and often a great difference, to other men. What a difference it makes to a child whether it is born in an English or an African home ! In a Christian family or an opium den ! What a difference it makes to a youth whether he ' begins life ' in a ' business house ' of successful probity or in a ' shaky concern ' whose survival is a ' dishonest chance ' ! Or if his first associates be young gamblers or ' steady fellows ' ! It is easy to multiply examples. We are only illustrating the truth that man is societary. This is fact. And its most obvious consequence is that men have much to do in the making or marring of each other's destinies. A theist must hold God responsible for this fact. He may rightly urge that ' on the whole ' it brings benefit rather than bane, and that ' in the consummation ' it will bring to a perfected mankind pure and untold benefit. Yet the truth remains that here and now, by the will of God, one man's character and destiny largely depend upon what other men are and do. This is just what the ' solidarity of man ' means. And, having admitted this truth in its other instances, the Christian theist

can hardly refuse to admit it, on the mere ground of its difficulty, in the one instance of intercession. It is true that, to speak 'after the manner of men,' in this instance God seems to be more directly responsible for the issues of the law than in others, but on reflection it appears that this is not really so. A man is as much responsible for the working of his will upon another through some complex machine as if he worked the same will through the 'direct' use of his right hand. Similarly, God is just as responsible for creating a complex universe wherein men cannot help making and marring each other, as for allowing that one man should 'make a difference' to another directly through Himself by intercession. It cannot be right to admit the wider difficulty and decline the narrower. Finally, it needs perhaps to be added that power in intercession does not depend upon the mere number of prayers, but upon the urgency of one man's desire for another. The latter will not always show itself in frequent petitions, and it will never suppose that it can secure anything by 'vain repetitions,' but it will colour the whole of the constant fellowship that a true man holds with God. Power in intercession depends upon closeness of fellowship rather than reduplication of request.[1]

[1] The parable of the Importunate Friend (Luke xi. 5 ff.) does not contradict this, but supports it. In it Jesus is using the argument *a fortiori*. The sleepy householder will not 'arise and give *because he is his friend*'—that is, on ground of fellowship—but surely God gives *just for this reason*. This is Jesus's line of thought (see especially verses 9–13).

XXIII

FELLOWSHIP AND ETERNITY

In an earlier chapter[1] it was found that a belief in eternal life is characteristic of the Christian experience, and that the belief has its focus in the Christian's fellowship with God in Christ, and its historical starting-point in the Resurrection of Jesus. In that chapter mention was also made of the early Christian belief in the Parousia of Christ and in some kind of 'resurrection of the body.' Here these last subjects are postponed to a later stage. Those Christians who doubt or deny the dogma of a bodily 'resurrection' assert confidently their belief in the real resurrection of Jesus and in His present and eternal life. They assert also their belief that true Christians survive death and pass after it into a nobler kind of life. Those, too, who believe in a 'resurrection of the body' admit that the belief in the survival and consummation of that which is spiritual in human personality is the more fundamental belief of the two.

It is important to note that the Christian doctrine of immortality is not primarily philosophical. It does not build, like Plato's, on metaphysical reasoning. No doubt it has often been defended and explored by such

[1] Chapter ix.

reasoning,[1] but it existed before this process began and it exists still in multitudes of instances without it. Again, if any 'materialistic' or purely 'naturalistic' philosophy were ever to be universally accepted as true, no doubt the Christian belief in immortality would perish, but then so would Christianity as a whole. The Christian belief in 'eternal life' grows out of the Christian experience. It is true that, since it is a belief about the 'future,' there is a sense in which it cannot be 'proved,' but then it shares this disability with all other beliefs about the future. When we speak of something that is beyond the whole experience of man, past and present, it is impossible to 'prove' anything about it in the way in which 'proof' is possible for beliefs that only have to do with the past. The existence of the New Jerusalem cannot be 'proved' in the same sense as that of the old Jerusalem. Here all who 'walk' at all, whether they be Christian or not, 'walk by faith and not by sight.' All that can even be asked comes to this: 'Judging by the analogies of our experience "here," is there good ground for the expectation of its continuance "hereafter"?' On this subject, in particular, Dr. Bruce's saying is in point, 'A man can be an agnostic if he likes,' for it is possible to demand a kind of proof which it is impossible to give.

Yet the Christian belief about the hereafter does in a certain sense 'build on experience.' It has some relation to history. Many Christians, we say again, who deny the reality of the 'physical appearances'

[1] It may be noted in passing that if it be allowed that there is any validity in the 'pragmatic test,' it may be applied to this subject. The belief in a personal 'hereafter' has 'worth' for life 'here.'

of the Risen Christ to the first disciples, agree with their fellow-believers that after the Resurrection those first Christians had real experience of His fellowship, and that this experience was one of fellowship with the 'same Jesus' whom they had known 'in the flesh.' They agree further that age after age this fellowship has continued, and that the 'same Jesus' is alive now. How is it possible to have fellowship with one who has ceased to be? The time has come when the claim of some that they have fellowship with others of 'the dead' receives serious scrutiny, even from those who decide, after scrutiny, that the claim cannot be substantiated. What then of the claim of multitudes, in many ages and many lands, that they 'know Christ'? It is possible to be so absorbed in searching the obscure corners of the skies for some comet, which may or may not be there, that one forgets the sun! At the least the truth recurs that, if Christ has not survived death, then not only the Christian belief in immortality perishes, but the whole of Christianity in the usual meaning of the word. The New Testament everywhere bases the belief in immortality upon the resurrection of Jesus. It may seem to a careless reader that the appeal is wholly to the 'physical appearances,' but this is not really so. If the story of the Ascension had ended men's fellowship with Jesus Christ, there would have been no Christian history. There was something more: 'I am with you alway.' 'There is an eternity,' says the Christian, 'for I know Christ.'

But he goes further. He adds, 'I believe that I shall share that eternity with Him.' If the ground of

this further belief be sought, the easiest way to relate it to the preceding discussion is to recall what was said about Christ being the representative man and the head of a new mankind. Many familiar texts spring at once to the mind : ' Christ the first-fruits, then they that are Christ's ' ; ' If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified with Him ' ; ' It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him ' ; ' Because I live, ye shall live also.'[1] However different the distinctions that exegetes make in such passages between the ' husk ' and the ' kernel,' they all agree that at the heart of the ' kernel,' so to say, there is the creed that in some way the Christian who begins to be like Christ ' here,' will go on to be like Him ' hereafter.' If the living Christ is still ' the Son of Man,' at least those sons of men who through faith are ' one with Him ' will share His kind of eternity.

It is easy to show how readily this belief falls in with other great Christian doctrines. This, indeed, is sure to be so if Christian truth is really an organic whole. One or two illustrations may be given. The Christian claims that God is his Father. It is impossible to believe in a Father who for a little while humours His children with the hope of the continuance of the fellowship that makes the home, and then arranges for those children to perish. Again, it cannot be that the Son of God died on the Cross to save mere mortals, or that the Holy Spirit strives through fifty or sixty years to ' perfect ' a man's character, just to see him thereafter ' cast as stubble to the void.' The Christian

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 23 ; Rom. viii. 17 ; 1 John iii. 2 ; John xiv. 19.

experience of fellowship with God in Christ demands that physical death shall be, not the end of the Christian, but only an episode in his eternity.[1]

The Christian's definition of 'eternal life,' then, is 'the life that is altogether fellowship with God in Christ.' Of this starting-point he is sure, but as soon as he passes further, he begins to be doubtful. He knows that 'Heaven already is begun,' but he knows little else. He feels as little competent to answer some of the problems that throng, as a newly-hatched nestling to explain flight. Nevertheless Christians, like other believers in immortality, have done their best, age by age, to say in the 'forms of time' what they surmise as they peer into eternity. As might be expected, the first attempts were naïve. 'Eternity' was conceived as a 'heaven' that was somewhere else than here, and sometime else than now. In other words, it was thought of in terms of place and time. It was sometimes placed, for instance, beyond the stars, or it was thought of as an 'age' that followed this one. It is doubtful whether this hypothesis can altogether escape the difficulties that beset it. Modern astronomy asks where this 'beyond the stars' is, and modern geology adds that 'unending time' would be of no service in a universe that will, after some billions of years, 'burn itself out.' These are typical criticisms. It is clear that they depend upon the idea that eternity is bound by time and space. In recent centuries time has been more prominent than space in the definition of 'the Hereafter.' 'Eternity'

[1] It may be noted in passing that to define 'eternity' as fellowship is inconsistent with pantheism, for there can be no fellowship of One!

has been defined as 'unending time.' The idea is, no doubt, in some ways a serviceable approximation, yet another concept has long been favourite with deeper thinkers. It may perhaps be put in the phrase 'Eternity is timelessness.' To employ another term, which has been frequently used above, eternity is conceived, not as the continuance of time, but as transcending it. The idea is commonest in reference to God. For instance, it is said that neither 'He was' nor 'He will be' can properly be predicated of Him, but only 'He is.' It is possible that in the Hebrew name for God, Jahveh, there was a groping after the idea. It underlies a famous saying in John's Gospel, 'Before Abraham was, I am.' To say that under this concept 'eternity' is 'the everlasting now' is of course inadequate, for the time 'form' occurs twice in the phrase, but it still hints what is meant. It is even possible that in the self-consciousness of man, in his knowledge that yesterday, to-day and to-morrow he is the same, there is a hint of 'timelessness.' He who knows that there is a wall thereby knows that there is something beyond. Similarly, for modern thought, to quote a common saying, 'heaven is not so much a place as a state.' Indeed, for those who deny a physical resurrection, it is apparently not a place at all. Here again man's self-consciousness gives a hint of something that transcends it. We universally think of the 'soul' as being 'in' the body, but whereabouts? It is not to be further located. In reality, though the 'mind' or 'soul' of a man cannot think except in terms of space, it is itself not local. Here again we come upon

the truth that God alone is fully personal, and that man is only beginning to be. God is not bound by time and space, nor is Christ, the God-man, now that He has passed into 'eternity,' limited by them in the way in which He was on earth. As man attains unto eternity, they cease to prison him too.[1] All difficulties that base upon our limitation by space and time, lie, not against eternity, but against our poor attempts to conceive it.

Such an argument—here rather hinted than worked philosophically out—would not long ago have been scouted by many philosophers, but to-day they are more hesitant. For strange fates are befalling space and time! Einstein wants to resolve the latter into a 'fourth dimension' of the former. And others declare that every man makes his own space and time! Again, space and time are declared to be limited. Bounds are set to the universe, and to set a bound is to begin to transcend. It would be foolish to anticipate the results of the large discussions that are now proceeding in the philosophical and scientific worlds on the questions so raised. But at least it may be that space and time will turn out to be man's servants and not his masters, and that there will grow gradually a notion of transcendence, which in some way includes, while it surpasses them. 'Now we know in part,' yet we do know. 'Then shall we know even as also we have been known.' A belief in 'the ascension' of Christ does not depend upon the acceptance of the Ptolemaic astronomy, nor a belief in eternity upon the notion of 'unendingness.' The

[1] These two sentences are expanded and qualified in the next chapter.

doctrine of transcendence is returning in Christian thought. The Christian belief in eternal life builds upon a fellowship between persons, of whom One already transcends time and space, and the other will do so. Like Paul, we are 'persuaded that neither death, nor life . . . nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'[1] There can be no concept of a real eternity, any more than of a real time, except in terms of personal experience. Without this, both ideas are alike 'formal,' and so fail of reality.

When eternal life is conceived in terms of personal fellowship with God, several results seem to ensue. First, the idea of a stagnant eternity—a state in which the saints 'mark time' for ever and ever—disappears. For it is by fellowship that personality lives and grows. It is true that this process reaches a limit when the fellowship of two men is considered. The one gains presently all that he can gain from the other. So to speak, the cistern is exhausted. But of course, if a man hold fellowship with God, this is not so. The divine nature is no cistern, but a perennial spring. For him who has fellowship with God, life is always growth.[2] The idealist has long defined life as progress towards a dimly-conceived ideal. A Christian idealist may define it as the eternal approximation of man to the personality that is consummate in God. We are

[1] Rom. viii. 38 f.

[2] Cf. Keble, in his poem for 'Ascension Day' in *The Christian Year*:

> Then shall we see Thee as Thou art,
> For ever fixed in no unfruitful gaze,
> But such as lifts the new-created heart,
> Age after age, in worthier love and praise.

' made in His image,' so we shall pass ' from glory unto glory, into the same image.' In the Christian ' heaven ' there is the zest of perpetual achievement and equally perpetual endeavour. ' He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him,' said Christ, ' shall never thirst, for the water that I shall give him shall be in him, a spring of water leaping up into eternal life.'[1] Many men of science to-day say that growth is by epigenesis —that, while in true growth there is continuity, there is also perennial novelty—that a growing thing both remains the same and continually becomes something else. This gives no bad account of the Christian hope of immortality. Eternal life is eternal progress.[2]

So far we have spoken of ' the Hereafter ' almost entirely in ' terms of the individual,' but here, as everywhere else, the societary element in man's nature has a meaning. They who have fellowship with Christ now, thereby have fellowship with each other. So ' hereafter,' by their common fellowship with the Man of Men, believers will naturally perfect fellowship with each other, and a new mankind arise that is at once the Kingdom of Christ, the family of God, and the realm of the unimpeded Holy Spirit. It is impossible to dream adequately of the nature of such a mankind. Frequently in the past the Apocalyptic vision of the ' holy city, the new Jerusalem,' has been taken literally ; if it be taken symbolically and its meaning be spelt out so, a beginning may perhaps be made with the alphabet of the society called ' heaven.' One of its characteristics is that, while it

[1] John iv. 14.
[2] Cf. the chapter on ' The " Saint " and the " Perfect," '

is the final society, it will itself know no finality. As the individual, so the society will develop for ever! As the individual soars towards the likeness of God, so the society of men will soar towards the likeness of that perfect society into which we dimly grope when we speak of the Trinity. God, One and Three, is the goal of man, at once attained and unattainable, as the sky to the eagle.

What of bliss? Is happiness an element in 'heaven'? It has often appeared as the primary element, even in the thinking of Christians. This, however, is obvious error, for in Christianity character is placed higher than joy. But, while bliss falls second to character, is it not a necessary ingredient in the concept of perfect fellowship? It seems as if it must be, as the constant witness of the Christian hope for many centuries shows. Yet for those who have no experience of a sorrowless world, it is very hard to answer some of the questions that at once arise. In men's experience here joy palls unless it be set against the background of sorrow, even as a sunset of perfect beauty needs a cloud. Again, as has been seen above,[1] not a few thinkers to-day find a place for sorrow in the nature of God; if they are right, will there not also be a place for it in the nature of those who for ever grow more and more like Him? It may be said that He knows sorrow only because of man's sin, and that when sin is gone, God Himself will be redeemed from pain. Yet, even then—and apart from the question of the existence and perpetuity of 'hell'—would not God regret that sin had ever been?

[1] p. 151.

And is not regret a kind of sorrow? This is just one instance of the ease with which insoluble questions can be asked about a 'hereafter' of which we have no experience. None can know the secret of the transcendent until he himself transcends. He who believes in God believes in perfection, and, whatever may be true, of God or of the 'glorified,' during the strange episode of sin, it seems impossible that pain be an ultimate element in perfection. 'They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.'

What of freedom in eternity? Will there still be choice between good and bad? And, if so, may not sin again befall? It is not necessary here to do more than recall what was said about the two kinds of freedom—freedom of choice and freedom to 'be oneself,' to fulfil one's proper destiny.[1] The first is by its own nature a passing kind of freedom, and its proper business is to prepare the way for the second and nobler kind. Heaven is the state where everybody does just as he likes, for there everyone always spontaneously and utterly desires the right things. In 'heaven,' to make a new use of old phrases, the *posse non peccare* that the 'saint' has learnt on earth passes into *non posse peccare*. 'Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because His seed abideth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God!'[2] He cannot, not because he is prevented, but because of what he himself is. This is perfect liberty. To many the text seems incredible of the 'here,' but of the 'hereafter' it is almost obvious.

[1] Chapter xix. [2] 1 John iii. 9.

It has already been stated that, as Christian thought about the 'hereafter' recedes from the one thing of which it is certain—the continuance of the fellowship of man with God in Christ—problems multiply and the answer '*non liquet*' grows common. This phenomenon becomes still more pronounced as we pass to two other questions: first, what of the destiny of those who, not knowing Christ, have yet done the noblest that they knew? What, for instance, of Epictetus, and the Buddha, and Isaiah? And second, what of the destiny of the wicked? The concept of 'eternal life' as fellowship perhaps gives some light on the answer to both.

The first question is often briefly put in five words: 'What about the pious heathen?' The time is long past when Christians roundly asserted that all 'the heathen' 'go to hell.' Yet, at first sight, this seems inevitably to follow from the belief that there is no 'salvation' except by faith in Christ Jesus. Yet it only 'seems' to be so. This will be apparent if certain doctrines drawn out above be considered. If Christ be indeed the universal Man, if His Spirit rules in all true societies, if God is immanent in every good thing, then the consequence follows that every good man, in so far as he is good, is in fellowship with Christ, whether he knows it or not. There are some faint analogies of what is meant in the non-religious experience of men. A man holds a kind of fellowship with the author even of an anonymous book. In a beautiful garden, again, the visitor holds a kind of fellowship with the artist who planned it, even though he has not seen him and does not know his name. To

enter a great cathedral with understanding is to hold fellowship with the 'Gothic' builders whose dream it perpetuates. In the religious realm, it is common to-day to think of men as holding some degree of fellowship with One whom they 'ignorantly worship.' Even when worshippers inscribe their altar 'To the Unknown God,' it is because they do in some degree know Him. The doctrine of the God-Man requires that Christ has 'a universal reference.' He is 'the true light, which lighteth every man.'[1] It is possible to 'believe' in an 'unknown' Christ! This is another true paradox. It would be easy to deduce it from the chapter on 'The Holy Spirit.' It follows also from one of Jesus' best known parables. The Parable of Judgement that closes the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel has lost much of its real significance in the dispute about the meaning of the word 'eternal' in its closing sentence. In reality, Jesus asserts in the parable His universal 'reference.' As Son of Man He judges mankind. 'Before Him' '*all* nations' gather, not only those who know Him and His story. And He declares, almost in so many words, that every man's life has reference to Himself. He is so truly one with mankind that anyone who shows himself the true 'fellow' of other men, shows himself the true 'fellow' of Christ. It is a pitiful literalness that confines the exposition of the parable to almsgiving and its companion customs. Has a man 'done it unto' Christ if he gives an old pair of shoes to a beggar, and has he not so 'done it' if he makes a hundred pairs of good shoes, and makes them as well

[1] John i. 9.

as he can, because he loves to help his fellows? Has a man 'done it unto' Christ if he visits a burglar in prison, and has it nothing to do with Christ if he strives so to teach a hundred boys day by day that they shall never fall into prison at all? Clearly Jesus meant that the service of men is the service of the Man. Clearly too He meant, as always, that service is only service if its motive is love. Clearly, again, the motive of love in service carries with it true fellowship. Clearly, finally, He declares that true fellowship with men is always fellowship with Himself. This parable has often been treated as a contradiction of the doctrine of 'salvation by faith'; it is really an exposition of it, for it teaches that men are saved by fellowship with Christ. It has no reference whatever to a man who lives a bad life and now and then does kind deeds, for occasional kindnesses do not compensate for the constant harmfulness of being a bad man. The passage answers once for all the question, 'What of the pious heathen?' They are saved by their fellowship with Christ.[1]

But what of the destiny of the evil? What has the doctrine of fellowship to say of this? Here it will be well to go step by step, and to premise that all suggestions are tentative.

It has already been more than once stated that it is the nature of freedom of choice to pass away. By its exercise it forms habits and so dies. There is truth in the old series of sayings, 'Sow an act and reap a habit; sow a habit and reap a character; sow a character and reap a destiny.' When any one has

[1] For the relation of this truth to Foreign Missions, see pp. 157 f.

made a certain choice in a certain way twenty times he is less able to make it in any other way the twenty-first time. Freedom of choice perishes of necessity, though it only perishes slowly. This needs no further elaboration. It should be noted, however, that this truth does not involve the cessation of all change. It means rather that the *direction* of change is fixed. When first a twig bursts from the stem of a tree, it is possible to bend it in more directions than one, but when it has grown into a great bough it cannot be so bent. Yet it still changes, for it still grows. But the direction of its change is fixed. Biologists say that once upon a time there were creatures that were neither whale nor horse nor man ; and that they had members that were neither fin nor hoof nor hand. Some of them began to use this organ in a given way and continued so to do, and it became a fin ; others used it in a second way, and it grew into a hoof ; yet others used it in a third way, and it changed into a hand. At a given point in these evolutions the freedom of choice passed. After it the creature could no longer take any of three courses ; it was confined to one. This, however, does not mean that its organ evolved no further, but that the direction of its evolution was now fixed. Or, to quote again an instance already taken,[1] a boy in his ''teens' may 'have it in him' to become either a mechanic or an artist. He hesitates perhaps at first, but then chooses. For a while it is still possible for him to forsake the one calling and adopt the other, but, as the years pass, this change becomes harder and harder, until at last

[1] pp. 196 f.

it is scarcely possible at all. At sixteen he might have been either mechanic or artist ; at sixty he may be irrevocably one or the other. An aptitude, like a physical organ, atrophies if it is never used. This law seems to hold in what is called the ' spiritual realm.' There comes a time there too when *change of direction* is difficult, though *development in a given direction* is still possible and likely. There dawns the day when he ' that is righteous ' can do no other than ' be righteous yet more,' and when he that is ' filthy ' can only be ' filthy yet more.'[1] It has been seen above that for the former this means that liberty of choice passes into the nobler liberty of nature. What is the issue for the latter ?

This wide law has a particular application in the realm of fellowship. Two lads are great friends at school. This is so, of course, because they have much in common, for ' like runs to like.' But on leaving school their paths sever ; they choose different ways of life ; further and further they pass apart. If now they meet, they may indeed hold an hour's fellowship of memories, but they could not live together, knit soul with soul, as they did in the far away days of schoolboy intimacy. Jean Ingelow has given the story classic expression in her pitiful poem ' Divided.' There is no need to add examples. Fellowship either grows or withers. And here again, while it grows harder and harder to form new kinds of fellowship, friendships of the old kind may grow deeper and deeper. Options diminish with time ; alternatives disappear ; finally that which is, is that which will be. There may perhaps

[1] Rev. xxii. 11 (R. V. margin).

be new *instances* of fellowship, but not new *kinds*. Many new things may be cast in the mould, but the mould itself is not plastic. The *type* of fellowship is fixed.

This law has been applied already, both implicitly and explicitly, to the Christian's fellowship with God in Christ. 'Heaven' is just an instance of its process. Another instance suggests itself. One of the definitions of sin given above was 'the refusal of the fellowship of God.' What of those who so refuse? What of those who persistently refuse? Must they not become more and more incapable of the fellowship that they decline? Is there no spiritual atrophy? Is it not at least theoretically possible that at last a man's habitual rejection of God's offer of fellowship in Christ will leave him incapable of it? Did not Jesus Himself say that there is a sin 'against the Holy Spirit' that may be rightly called 'an eternal sin'?[1] Psychology says so too.

At what point does freedom of choice finally pass away? It was confidently assumed by our fathers that it did so at the moment of physical death. 'There are no pardons in the tomb.' It is not clear, however, that the New Testament teaches this. Rather, it gives no answer to the question. And there seems to be no reason why the death of the body should, as a matter of course, fix destiny.[2] Here, as on so many other questions about the 'hereafter,' there is scope for a 'Christian agnosticism.' Of course, there are two alternatives. It may be that, at least

[1] Mark iii. 29.

[2] Yet this seems to require, not only that after death bad men may begin to be good, but good men begin to be bad.

sometimes, the power to choose does not pass away till after physical death, but it may also be that sometimes it perishes before it. In what is here said there is no real encouragement for those who light-heartedly think, 'I will turn to God when I am dead.' For the law of atrophy is always at work, and for those who make a wrong choice that law is perpetually as dreadful as it is glad perpetually for those who make a right one. God has so made the universe that all life is a Judgement Day.

Can anything more be said about 'the future of the wicked'? It has often been described in terms of pain, but it is at least doubtful whether this concept can be maintained. The question of 'the resurrection of the body' has been reserved for the next chapter. If, however, it be asserted that in the future the wicked have 'bodies,' it does not seem possible that these should be for ever in pain, for it is the nature of physical pain to exhaust itself. The body, as we know it, has a 'point of saturation' both for pleasure and pain. This is true both of a too acute feeling and a too prolonged one. It is easy, indeed, to imagine that 'hereafter' the blessed are given a body capable of a variety of delights and so of continuous joy, but are the wicked given one capable of a variety of agonies and so of perpetual pain? It is as well to put this down in 'cold print,' for the upholders of eternal physical torment to-day do not usually think out what they say. They claim foothold, it is true, in the New Testament, but this is only by taking literally a few symbolic passages. On the other hand, if it be said, as now it usually is said,

that the ' pains of hell ' are ' spiritual,' what does this imply? A more exact name for ' spiritual pain ' is remorse or regret. But while there is remorse, there is hope. For if a man feels remorse, he wishes that he were other than he is; and so long as he can so wish, he has not altogether ' quenched the Spirit,' he has not utterly refused God. Even in this world the really ' hopeless cases ' are not the remorseful but the ' indifferent.' Where there is regret there is hope.

Yet from the Christian point of view there is a worse account of the state called ' hell ' than everlasting pain. It has been claimed above that the chief element in the state called ' heaven ' is not happiness but right character. Is not the opposite true of ' hell '? Sin is worse than pain. To have become inevitably bad is worse than to be inevitably miserable. To make pain the chief account of ' the future of the wicked ' is to be a hedonist and not a Christian.

If a word be sought as an alternative to ' pain ' it would perhaps be ' degradation.' It has been urged above that the story of a human life, rightly lived, is the story of the gradual attainment of ' personality.' This assumes that in man ' here ' ' personality ' is only embryonic or at the most adolescent. If ' heaven ' is its development, is not ' hell ' its loss? If the habit of fellowship with God carries with it the gradual attainment of ' personality,' does not the habit of refusing that fellowship carry with it the loss of ' personality '? The degradation that is the outcome of sin may mean the descent into something less than personal. In the physical realm there are many

instances in which a thing, having failed to be what it 'was made to be,' 'perishes' by becoming something 'lower.' Astronomers tell us that there are multitudes of incipient worlds in the universe, but that only through a certain happy combination of conditions can any one of them become such a world as the earth, with its beauty, its use, and its mankind. What happens to the others? They pass, with their apparent 'end' unrealized, into other and lower forms of 'matter.' They serve other purposes in the universe of God. Nor is this process usually stigmatized as 'waste,' though it is a mystery why the Creator should make worlds that fail to be what they might be. Similarly, of hundreds of acorns that fall from an oak, only one becomes the tree that each of them 'has it in it' to be. The rest 'fail'; it 'succeeds.' The botanist, however, does not call this 'waste.' He points out that these incipient oaks fail indeed to be oaks, but passing into the mould by which all oaks live, enrich it, and so serve another of the divine purposes. These are poor analogies, but they are all we have. Of the souls that fail to attain 'personality' it may prove true that they become something less than 'personal,' and that their eternal 'failure' is not altogether 'waste.' Yet here we see at best 'through a glass darkly.' Another question may perhaps be added. Dr. Johnson once said, 'Without truth there must be a dissolution of society. . . . I remember this remark of Sir Thomas Browne's: "Do the devils lie? No; for then Hell could not subsist."'[1] This raises a certain issue. It has been

[1] Boswell's *Johnson*, year 1778.

argued above that the true bond of human society is the Holy Spirit, and that all true fellowship of man with man grounds on the fellowship of man with God. If this be so, how can the fellowship of man with man continue where the refusal of God's fellowship is absolute? It seems that the former must disappear with the latter. This is consonant with the idea that 'hell' is loss of personality, for fellowship is a function of personality. To those who think, this is a terrible idea. 'This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent'; what is the correlative doctrine?

So far, then, it seems that the concept that Christianity ought to be defined in terms of fellowship supports the old doctrine of 'eternal punishment,' even while it defines it in its own way. It is to be admitted too that, at least *prima facie*, this is the doctrine of the New Testament, as almost all its readers thought for the first seventeen hundred years of its history. Yet to-day there is a protest, and the protest bases ultimately upon the truths of psychology. It can be stated in very few words, but they are words of great weight, many think of overwhelming weight. The protest cries, 'But God is love!' Questions follow. Is it the way of love ever to 'give in'? Does not a lover seek the fellowship of his beloved 'until he find'? And is not this Lover almighty? Is He to be foiled? So a single psychological truth is set over against a company of others, and the one is declared greater than the company. And every Christian wishes that it were so! What is to be said?

All that is laid out above in support of the old

doctrine, in however new a form, depends upon the postulate that man is free, that he is already so far 'personal' that he can choose for himself. With this starting-point it seems to follow, at least theoretically, that it is impossible to assert that all men must at length be saved. 'Universalism' seems to be incompatible with freedom. Man's misused liberty requires a 'hell'! On the other hand, the 'universalist' begins from the sovereignty of God. Yet he uses this old Calvinistic idea in quite a new way. The old Calvinist declared, 'God wills that some live for ever in heaven, and that others pass eternity in hell, and His will prevails.' The 'universalist' pleads, 'God wills that all live with Him for ever, and His will prevails.' In other words, the divine sovereignty is made to-day the servant of the divine love. Yet the idea of sovereignty is there. It therefore appears that the problem of the future of the wicked raises, in a climacteric instance, the problem of the harmonizing of human freedom with divine sovereignty.[1] May it not be that the best way with this most difficult instance is the way that is taken with the less difficult? Christian 'common thought' assumes that in this world omnipotence and freedom are both facts, even though it does not know how to harmonize them. More philosophic thought often asserts the same thing, calling it an 'antinomy.' In the practice of life, this belief on the whole 'works' best. In other words, human thought, peering over its own boundaries, finds itself driven to assert two truths that to it are logical contradictories, and to

[1] Cf. the chapter on 'Freedom and Fellowship.'

claim that the ' transcendent ' turns the contradictory into the complementary. Why should not the antinomy that links human freedom with divine sovereignty obtain in the supreme instance as well as in others ? It is not mere folly to say, ' I believe both in the eternal punishment of the wicked and in the sovereignty of God's love.'

XXIV

FELLOWSHIP AND 'NATURE'

In the world of which we have experience there are three kinds of beings, distinct though inter-related. These are God, men, and what is called by the ugly term 'matter.' So far we have spoken almost entirely of the first two. It may seem at first sight that the last has nothing to do with fellowship, but this is not really so. Yet with it we get further than ever away from that which is central in the Christian experience. With it, indeed, we reach the circumference. In consequence, some of the things that are here said are among the least certain and the least important in Christian teaching. This statement, qualified though it is, would need still further qualification if the subject of 'Sacraments' were not omitted in this study. Again, a complete discussion would have a chapter about animals—those strange beings that lie between the world of men and the world of things. Here, however, the discussion is limited for the most part to the general relation of the inanimate world to fellowship. For this world the word 'nature' may be used, instead of the term 'matter.'

It is agreed that both in the Old Testament and the New, nature is thought of as created by God, and therefore as originally good. Whether it has remained good

will be briefly discussed later. The relation of nature to fellowship is part of a wider question—the relation of nature to persons, to man, and to God. Something may be said of these in turn.

Man uses nature for the satisfaction of his needs. He makes his houses of stones, his boats of wood, his spades of iron ; animals and plants are his food. Some of his uses of nature may be mistaken. The vegetarian, for instance, claims that this is so when men eat meat, and all agree that to waste 'the good gifts of God' is sin. But it is generally allowed that man has a right to use nature in manifold ways to meet his needs. Else, indeed, he could not live at all. This fact was the starting-point of the old doctrine of man's 'dominion' in nature, as the very words of the pertinent verses in the opening passage of Genesis show.[1] To-day man is very busy exploring the 'secrets' of nature, and in discovering one after another the ways in which he can turn it to his own ends. It is an axiom of to-day's life that this is right and good.

The needs that man seeks to satisfy through nature are not all 'material.' On the contrary, some of them are 'spiritual.' Here falls the realm of art. In all its various forms man seeks through nature—through things seen or things heard or even through things touched or tasted or smelt—to 'express himself.' A true picture, a true poem, a true oratorio, all express the personality of their authors. Sometimes such expression seems to aim at nothing beyond itself. A singer will sometimes sing when he is alone, for instance, and Tennyson once said that, when he sat

[1] Gen. i. 28 f.

musing by the fire, 'many a fine line went up the chimney.' More usually, however, the artist 'expresses himself' as a natural method of fellowship with other men. Poets write to be read, sculptors carve that other men may see their carvings, and so on. Indeed here every man is a kind of artist. He uses a set of sounds called speech, or a set of marks called writing, in order that through them his 'personality' may 'reach' another 'personality.' No one can fully explain how, but every one knows that it is so. And of course both sounds and marks belong to 'the material world.' As seen above, it is at present subject of dispute whether two human beings can ever 'communicate with each other'—that is, hold fellowship—without the use of material media.[1] Into this dispute there is no need to enter. It is enough that nature, or 'matter,' supplies the usual means or tool of human fellowship, and that, at least as yet, men neither could nor would dispense with this tool. It is used in religious fellowship as well as in all other types. No society, whether religious or not, can exist without it. Some societies use it more, and some less, but all use it.

Among the material media of human fellowship the human body holds easily the primary place. This too is most easily illustrated from the commonest ways of fellowship. The spoken and written word are both the product of bodily action. Again, when an artist uses other parts of nature than his body to 'express himself,' he can only do so through his body. The painter speaks to others through his picture, but he

[1] Cf. pp. 230 ff.

paints it with hand and eye. Through the body man 'reaches' nature that through it he may 'reach' other men. 'In this life' man is body-soul. We have no knowledge of any human being who is not this dual thing. How two so disparate things come to be a unit, no philosopher seems even to be able to guess, but that they are one is obvious. And the body is, therefore, *par excellence*, the medium of the fellowship of men.

When we pass from the fellowship of man with man to the fellowship of man with God, a difference at once emerges. For we do not believe that God has a body. Yet we do believe that He stands in certain relations to nature. We believe that He made, or that He is all the time making, nature. We believe, again, that He is immanent in nature. Sometimes indeed this kind of immanence has been treated as the only kind. Theology will yet have to make clear that there are at least two types of immanence—the immanence of God in nature and the immanence of God in persons. The old name for the latter is 'conscience,' at least in one of the senses of that ambiguous word. But God is also immanent in nature. He does not use it, of course, to satisfy any bodily needs, but He does use it in ways analogous to the other two human uses named above. God is the great artist. Some have wondered that He should paint so many sunsets for none to see but Himself, that so many flowers are 'born to blush unseen,' and so on. But God seems to share with those imperfect persons called men the artist's glad habit of self-expression for its own sake. There is no waste of beauty in God's universe, for there is none of its beauty

that God does not Himself enjoy. Yet there is another use of His art. It is a medium of fellowship. God speaks to men in nature. This is so in fact, in spite of the phenomenon of nature's pain. While there is no doubt that God can and does 'communicate' with men 'spirit to spirit,' without material media, there is no doubt either that He can and does communicate with them through material media. Kant and Wordsworth agree here and tell the truth. To the one God spoke through 'the starry heavens,' to the other through 'the light of setting suns.'

This doctrine of the divine artist reacts upon the doctrine of creation. When the Deistic theory of creation obtained, God was thought of as having 'created' the universe 'once upon a time,' and as having then ceased to create. Thereafter He might no doubt take His part, as 'Providence,' within the universe that He had made, but as 'Creator' His task was over. This concept had two shortcomings—it applied the category of time to God, and it did less than justice to the concept of immanence. To-day's thought holds that God 'transcends' time, and that His immanence in nature is real. Again, if God delights in creating, why should He now be debarred from it? Why should not the divine artist be ever at work? If He is artist at all, if He delights in self-expression, will He not be ever creating? It would seem that this is a worthier concept of His nature than that of a God whose creative work exhausted itself in a given epoch.[1]

[1] It is true that, on the Christian theory, the self-expression of God finds its one perfect and eternal instance in the Son, but, if this truth be held to foreclose creation in any 'periods' of 'eternity,' it would seem to preclude it in all.

A doctrine of 'eternal' or 'continuous creation,' therefore, has grown up, as sequel to the doctrine of immanence. Under it God is thought of as always operative in nature, as well creating as 'overruling.' The doctrine may seem at first to put a second 'ultimate'—'matter,' or at least 'time and space'—over against God, and so to limit Him. But this objection requires not only that 'matter' be in some sense 'eternal,' but also that it be independent of God. It is possible to hold that God is 'eternally' creative, yet that His creation, while 'eternal' in a derivative sense, is still altogether dependent upon Him for its existence. To many this seems the most satisfactory, or the least unsatisfactory doctrine, of 'nature.' Of course it has its own difficulties. One asks 'How can "matter" be "eternal," even in a derivative sense, especially when "eternal" is defined as "transcendent of time and space"? Does "matter" then in some way "transcend time and space"?' Formerly the question might have been thought to answer itself, and to disprove the whole account of 'matter' now suggested. But to-day, when philosophy and science are peering again into the problems of what 'time and space' and 'matter' are, and when it is proposed to treat the first two as less than ultimate and the last as other than 'mass,' the theory is not so lightly dismissed. It may turn out that, just as a surface has no real existence except as a 'function' of a solid, so time and space have no existence except as 'functions'—or a 'function'—of 'eternity.' Yet, as 'functions,' they would still have real existence. There is no need to plunge further into

modern metaphysics. Enough has been said perhaps to show that the doctrine that God is eternally creative is at least admissible. What artist is content to be inert?

So far many men of religion who are not Christians would agree, but Christians go further. They hold that the relation of God to nature is so close, and that nature is so good, that God Himself became 'incarnate.' Here again the doctrine of Christ is the climax of Christian thought. 'All *things* were made through [the Word] and without Him was not anything made; that which hath been made was *life* in Him; and the life was the *light* of men'[1]—here is the first chapter of Genesis in epitome. First there comes inanimate nature, then the world of plant and animal life, and then that human 'light' which we call 'personality.' And all this comes through and by 'the Word'—all these things, therefore, tell something of the nature of God. And, as life tells more than 'matter,' so personality tells more than life. But there is still something further and climacteric—'the Word became flesh.' Theologians have disputed whether there would have been an Incarnation if there had been no sin, but even those who say that there would not, allow that nature is so noble that it was possible that God should 'partake of flesh and blood.' Yet the other opinion is to be preferred—that, if there had been no sin, the Son of God would still have become incarnate, that He might complete and perfect the evolution of mankind. Those who so say, claim not only that it was possible that the Word who 'was God' should 'become flesh,' but that it was His delight so to do. The Incarnation

[1] John i. 3 f. (R.V. margin).

is for them the climax of nature as well as of man, or rather it is the climax of nature because it is the climax of man, for man is nature's 'last term.' On either opinion, the Christian doctrine of nature culminates in the Incarnation.

The last two paragraphs, in different ways, raise the question, 'Has the world of things any place in the "hereafter"? Has "nature," and in particular the human body, any part in "eternity"? Can we still subscribe, in however modified a sense, to the old article of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the resurrection of the body"?' It is not a little remarkable that the Roman and Greek Churches, which have taught that to be 'perfect' a Christian must forgo such 'things of the flesh' as marriage and property, yet assert that the body, and with it 'matter,' have a place in the hereafter, while the Protestant world, which rejects the ascetic ideal, and in which men have flung themselves with greater abandon upon the world of science, has begun to doubt whether 'nature' has any place in 'eternity' at all. To-day, just when mankind stands a-tiptoe in expectation of the quick revelation of still more and greater wonders in the world of things, men begin to insist that that world is altogether temporary, and that to posit its continuance in 'eternity' in any way, is to limit and thwart everlasting life! More and more the hereafter is conceived as a fellowship with God and with other men; yet it is suggested that in it one of the great media of fellowship is superfluous. Just as the wonder of the universe begins to be spelt out, it is assumed that that universe is doomed.

There are several reasons for this. One is that the man of science calculates with precision that sundry billions of years hence this universe will 'burn itself out' and be 'no more seen.'[1] It is an interesting calculation, but it clearly proceeds upon the old Deistic assumption that God is not now creating, and will never again create, or that, if He does so, there will be some 'clear cut' between His new universe and His old one—and these assumptions are not those of all theists.[2] Another reason is philosophic. Many metaphysical problems beset the theory that 'matter' and 'eternity' have some relation to each other. These can neither be stated nor discussed in a parenthesis, though it may be doubted whether the denial of this relation does not carry with it still greater difficulties. But the 'man in the street' is not much troubled with philosophical difficulties. He gets tired in his workaday world, and, as he tires, his body grows weary and tends to become a 'drag'; so he longs for a mode of existence where, as he thinks, there will be no weariness because there is no body. It does not occur to him that the soul may be weary as well as the body, nor that the body is the medium of many of his enjoyments as well as of his pains. If he knows his New Testament at all, he recalls sundry texts of Paul about 'the flesh,' and longs to be rid of its 'burdens.' He does not so often remember that the same Paul calls the body 'a temple of the Holy Spirit,' nor that he speaks of its being 'delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glory

[1] Even Troeltsch held that 'there is far more certainty about the advent of the last man cooking the last potato with the last fire of coals, than . . . of the Second Coming of Christ.' (Sleigh, *The Sufficiency of Christianity and Ernst Troeltsch*, p. 185.)

[2] See also pp. 257 ff.

of the liberty of the sons of God.'[1] And he sees the foolishness of the old Christian belief that every saint will spring from his grave at the Parousia with the 'identic body' that was buried on that spot. Is there no way out of these perplexities except the extreme assertion that nature has no place at all in the 'world to come'?

While it is agreed among Christians that nature is good, it is also agreed that it is imperfect or at least immature. The earthquake, the pestilence, and the prevalence of pain seem to prove so much. Why should there be any failure at all in a universe that God has made? Why should there even be any immaturities of fell result in such a universe? There is no complete answer to these questions. Very often, however, a connexion has been found between nature's failures and sin. This connexion is made in more than one way in the Bible. To-day the idea is hard to hold, for some of the failures are found to have been in the world before man appeared upon it. Some say that God, anticipating sin, made such a universe as would suit a sinful race. This looks rather artificial, but it may be only an attempt to point out that this difficulty, like so many others, proceeds upon the postulate that God is subject to the category of time. If for the 'everlasting now' the past and present are simultaneous, the difficulty seems to vanish. Another answer makes sin earlier than man. 'Of old time' this answer took the form of a belief in sinful 'angels,' or 'devils'; in the future, if it should prove that even in the animal world there are the first hints of an embryonic morality, the answer

[1] For 'the flesh' here see pp. 222 ff.

may take the form that in the animal world there are also the first hints of sin. Such a man of science as Reinheimer suggests that the predatory animals have gone astray.[1] Yet all this leaves much of the difficulty untouched. For instance, it does not answer the question, 'Why should the world of the inanimate be so made that there comes an earthquake to destroy a multitude both of the just and the unjust?'[2]

For the Christian evolutionist the difficulties are perhaps not quite as great. In Christian thought man is the climax of nature, and the idea readily follows that the perfection of an evolving world can only come with the perfection of man, and that therefore the sin of man, as it delays his evolution, delays of necessity the evolution of his universe too. If the world is only coming to be what a world ought to be, and if man is only becoming that which he ought to be—a 'person,'—the 'consummation' of the former and larger process may need to wait for the 'consummation' of the latter and smaller. To make use of the astronomer's billions of years, it may be that at last man will learn not only what the secrets of his universe are, but how to control them, and with this control there may come for both a 'consummation':

> The one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves.

This idea is not absent from the New Testament. Perhaps its most famous enunciation is a passage of

[1] See Dr. T. Stephenson's article 'A New Outlook in Biology,' in *London Quarterly Review*, October, 1923.

[2] The further suggestion that such a 'destruction' is really only an episode in the story of such immortal beings as man, and that it may at length prove to be a beneficial episode, is too remote from the present subject to discuss here, but should be mentioned in passing.

Paul's: 'For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.'[1] This great passage does not stand alone. There is everywhere in the New Testament the idea that the world of things is to reach a consummation 'at the end of the days.'[2] It is to be admitted that the first Christians expected this consummation quickly. In this they were mistaken. Were they also mistaken in the whole idea that nature is to pass by consummation to perfection? Surely this is a nobler concept than the one that dooms this wondrous universe of God to mere extinction. If creation is a process and not an event, if it is God's habit to make continually an old world into a new one, why insist that this habit of His is to end? Men only know nature as spatial and temporary, but this limitation may lie in man and not in nature. May not it already partake of eternity? At least, may it not come to do so?

Some one may say 'Well, if it does, I shall have nothing to do with it, for at death I forsake it.' But is this so? Christians hold that God, who belongs to 'the spiritual world,' is still in relation to nature. They say the same of the Risen Christ. Why may not men too have a higher and better relation to nature when they themselves 'pass into' eternity than they have now? It is usually held to-day that at the Ascension

[1] Rom. viii. 19 f.

[2] e.g. Matt. xxviii. 20; Acts iii. 21; Rev. xxi. 1. For the passages that speak of 'fire' as the fate of the universe, see pp. 92 f.

Christ did not so much 'go away' from the world of things as transcend it. Is not He the type for other men?

What is His relation to nature now? Is it only that of God, or is it that of the God-Man? If the latter, what now is the relation of the Son of Man to nature? Some say that it is altogether unlike that which He bore to nature when on earth,—in brief, that He is now bodiless. Others think that, as in other instances of transcendence, so here, the new includes what was good in the old, while it surpasses it. This was the creed of the first Christians about the Risen Christ. The belief 'found itself' in two ways. First, they believed that some of them had *seen* the Risen Lord. The various accounts of the Resurrection are hard to piece together in detail, but they agree in the main facts. They declare that the Risen Christ had a body, yet that it was in some ways different from the bodies of men 'on earth,' while in some it was like them. It was rid of their limitations, but it retained and surpassed their excellencies. And with these old qualities there were new ones. This primitive Christian belief about the Risen Christ carried another with it. Believing that there was to be a consummation of nature, and also that its consummation awaited that of men, the first Christians believed too that the occasion and sign of its coming would be the Parousia of Christ.[1] They held that nature, like mankind, is to be consummate in Him. They believed that the Incarnation is not over, but continues for ever. No doubt they found it hard to say what they meant, for this is the fate of all who think about the future. No doubt their thoughts about

[1] Cf. the chapter on 'Christ in you, the Hope of Glory.'

minor questions were obscure and even confused. No doubt they left many problems unresolved. But they held to the idea that there is to be a place for nature in the 'hereafter' and that it will be consummate in the Parousia of Christ.

They went on to say that Christ is still the typical man, and that Christians 'hereafter' will have bodies like His. It will be said, 'Well, but this account of His body cannot be universalized; the records themselves declare that His body "saw no corruption"; other men's bodies do. There is here a difference.' This is true. Is there any help in the doctrine of His sinlessness? Those who deny that man's sin has degraded and corrupted nature may admit that it has degraded and corrupted man's own body. What follows? That in the 'hereafter' the 'spirits' of men take to themselves appropriate bodies—the wicked such as suit their degradation to the less than personal, and the righteous such as suit their sinlessness? Of the first idea there is no hint in Scripture, for it only treats the future of the wicked sporadically and incompletely. But about the future body of the righteous something very definite is said and said frequently: 'When He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is'; 'Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of His glory.'[1] What is the fifteenth of first Corinthians? A

[1] 1 John iii. 2; Phil. iii. 21. Some New Testament passages may seem to affirm a closer connexion between the new 'body' and the old than the argument above requires (e.g. 2 Cor. v. 1–4), yet this does not invalidate the argument, so far as it goes. And a writer who expected to be alive at the Parousia, would naturally think of his body as changing into another, rather than as decaying and making room for another, at that event. This might even be so with a writer who expected the Parousia *soon after* his own death.

great attempt to say what no one can yet fully explain —that the bodies of the 'saints' after death shall, like the body of Christ, be both like and unlike our bodies here; that the old imperfections and immaturities shall be gone, the old excellencies surpassed, and new excellencies supervene.[1] If nature partakes of eternity at all, and if men do the same, then it seems not unreasonable to think that the old way by which man was knit with nature through a body will also survive, and that men will find it still possible and blessed to hold fellowship with each other through the universe that God has suited to that end as to so many more. 'There is a spiritual body,' says St. Paul. The phrase is a paradox, but the borderland of our knowledge is the proper haunt of paradox. It may be that it would be loss and not gain either for nature at large to become extinct, or for men to spend a bodiless 'hereafter.' God may for ever speak to man through the glory and beauty of creation. The sacrament of nature may be eternal.

[1] Some hazard the suggestion that the body of the sinless Man was undergoing this transformation during the 'forty days' between the Resurrection and Ascension.

APPENDIX

THE VALIDITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE; SOME PROLEGOMENA

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THE VALIDITY OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE; SOME PROLEGOMENA

In the chapter on 'Forewords' it was suggested that the question of the validity of the Christian experience, while it does not fall within the compass of the present subject, is yet so nearly related to it that it cannot be altogether omitted. It was also suggested that the right place to discuss it, from the scientific point of view, is at the close of the examination of the Christian experience and its implicates, and not at the beginning; and that the questions involved are not yet so clearly defined as to make a full investigation easy or even possible. Some of the reasons for the last suggestion will appear below. Here an attempt is made to draw out a few of the prolegomena of the discussion. In doing this two chief ends are kept in view. The first is to show where the defence of the validity of the Christian experience falls entirely to the Christian apologist, and where he shares the duty of defence with others. The second is to make a beginning with the answer to a question that is obviously preliminary to the whole discussion: 'What are the proper criteria of validity in such instances?' The writer thinks, with many others, that the next Christian apologetic will need to defend the validity of the Christian experience, and that the attack upon it will be 'pushed to the gate.' The preliminary considerations here urged are arranged under three headings: 'The *Differentia* of the Christian Experience,' '"Subjectivism" and "Anthropomorphism,"' and 'The Criteria of Validity.'

A. THE *DIFFERENTIA* OF THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

It is convenient to begin with the question, 'What is there distinctive in the Christian experience, as compared with other religious experience?' Or, to use the pertinent technical

term, 'What is the *differentia* of the Christian experience?' An answer has been everywhere assumed, and it has been once or twice named in passing,[1] but it requires further elucidation at this point.

First, it is clear that this *differentia* does not lie in the 'subjectivity' of the Christian experience. For, whatever meaning be given to this ambiguous word, 'subjectivity' is not peculiar to the Christian kind of experience, but is common to many kinds, or even to all.[2] Next, it is also clear that the *differentia* that we seek does not lie in the fact that the Christian experience is one of fellowship, for there are many other experiences of fellowship in the world of men, as has again and again appeared above. Once more, the *differentia* of the Christian experience does not lie in the fact that it is religious, or, to give the pertinent definition of this last word, in the fact that the Christian claims that he has fellowship with God. The validity of the religious experience, as distinct from other experience, has indeed been much challenged of late, and in turn has found able defenders.[3] Of course, if it should at length prove true that man has no experience of God at all, the validity of the Christian experience would thereby be disproved; but, if the validity of religious experience be admitted in other instances, the Christian type of it cannot be rejected on the mere ground that it is religious. So far, it stands or falls with the class of phenomena to which it belongs. This means, at least at present, that it stands.

Again, the Christian experience is not peculiar as having a historical correlate. Experience and history are always correlative. It might be difficult to prove that every individual experience is related to history, but it is obvious that every experience common to a multitude of men, and occurrent generation after generation, is so related. If a given set of men called 'the English,' for instance, generation after generation share the experience called 'patriotism,' it will express itself in history at Runnymede and Crecy and Trafalgar and Mons. Further, the illustration shows that the relation is a dual one. If English patriotism produced Runnymede, Runnymede in turn fed English patriotism.

[1] pp. 35 f, 45. [2] On 'subjectivity' see pp. 297 ff.
[3] See, for instance, Waterhouse, *The Philosophy of Religious Experience*.

Again, this correlation is not really occasional and spasmodic. A few great events in English history have indeed just been selected for illustration, but every one knows that patriotism is really a continuous experience, that it shows itself daily in the million *minutiæ* of a nation's history, and that the reflex influence of the history upon the experience is constant too. The common and continuous Christian experience does not escape this rule. Ever since it was born, it has continually been at once the product and producer of Christian history. It is as useless to ask which is the more important as to inquire which half of the brain is ' fundamental ' to the other, or which blade of a paddle urges a canoe further. There can be no experience without history, no history without experience.

The phrase, ' ever since it was born,' suggests a further point. The Christian experience is not peculiar in beginning at a given epoch and in arising out of the life and teaching of a given man. Christianity began with Jesus as Buddhism with Gautama or Islam with Muhammed. It is indeed related to much that preceded Jesus' day, but Buddhism too has affinities with the thought of India in the days before the Buddha was born, and Islam with the history of Arabia before Muhammed began to teach. Yet, as without the Buddha there would have been no Buddhist experience, and without Muhammed no Muhammedan experience, so without Jesus there would have been no Christian experience. To put this in more common words, Christianity is not peculiar in having a founder.

We now, however, reach the true *differentia* of the Christian experience. The Christian claims that he now has fellowship with Someone who is both God and Man, that this experience is perennial in the Christian Church, that it began with the first disciples, and that the God-Man, with whom generation by generation Christians have had fellowship, is ' this same Jesus ' who lived in Palestine and died on Calvary and ' rose from the dead,' nineteen hundred years ago. As already suggested,[1] it appears to the writer that the identity of the ' living Christ ' and the ' historic Jesus ' is a fundamental tenet in Christianity. The Christian religion would perish if it lost either. Something might survive that called itself ' Christianity,' but it would be a misappropriation of the

[1] See p. 24.

term. Here falls the greatest instance of the correlation of history and experience.

It is sometimes maintained that this Christian claim is not unique. There was a time when such phrases were common as ' It is the habit of the ignorant to deify great men.' Careful writers, however, have forsaken such vague ' generalizations.' It is admitted, for instance, that the ' deification ' of Roman Emperors, and the pantheistic ' deification ' of all men, and the ' primitive ' shudder at the ' ghost ' of a dead man, differ radically, each in its own way, from the Christian claim about Christ. Indeed, it may almost be said that to-day the only parallel that is frequently urged is that between the Buddha and the Christ. Yet when this is examined, it is found to be no true parallel. For instance, there is no claim that the Buddha lived a sinless life ; there is no claim that he was the incarnation of a personal god ; there is no claim that he is personal now. Indeed, the belief that the ' ultimate being ' is impersonal, is the core of Buddhist theology. The Buddha, just because he was the Buddha, has passed more certainly than any other man into the state called Nirvana, and attained the bliss of ceasing to be a person. The ignorant may indeed be allowed to ' pray ' to him, as this is the nearest that they can come to that contemplation of the Nothingness of Life which the initiate or the philosophic reach, but to the initiate or the philosophic themselves, it would be mere foolishness to say that the ' Buddhist experience ' is that of a fellowship with a *person* who is God-Man. The discussion of the meaning of ' Nirvana ' and ' Parinirvana ' in Buddhism still continues, but none contend that Buddhism teaches the existence of a personal God, or that those who attain Nirvana remain personal. How then can there be anything rightly called ' fellowship ' with God ? Is it ' fellowship ' to lapse in the Non-Personal ? It is no doubt true that there have been Buddhist sects that have broken away from their religion's philosophic atheism, and it may be that in some of these, as in many other faiths, there is exhibited the dim striving of man to find fellowship with God. Such phenomena, however, only illustrate the failure of the Buddha's teaching and the need of men for the Christ. It remains true that the claim of the Christian to hold fellowship with a historic yet living person, Jesus Christ, God and Man, is unique.

Some may hesitate at this point and say, 'Yes, but even Jesus Christ is not "the last word" in Christianity. As He Himself said, His purpose is to "show" men "the Father" —that is, to lead men into fellowship with God.' This may be admitted, if it is added that the Christian's fellowship with the Father is 'mediated' through the Son. The *differentia* of the Christian experience may indeed be properly defined as a distinctive experience of God—Father, Son, Spirit—but it is through Jesus Christ, and through fellowship with Him, that the Christian learns the truth about both Father and Spirit, and, learning the truth, enters thereby into a more intimate and adequate fellowship with God than is possible to anyone who 'does not know Christ.' The *differentia* of the Christian experience, then, is the Christian's fellowship with God, as defined and informed by his fellowship with Christ. In defending the validity or reality of this fellowship, the Christian apologist stands at last alone.

B. 'SUBJECTIVISM' AND 'ANTHROPOMORPHISM'

THERE was a time when the Christian's claim to hold fellowship with Christ was summarily dismissed as a mere piece of fanaticism. This was signally true of England in the eighteenth century, when the Evangelical Revival recalled men's minds once more to the truths of Christian mysticism. A certain bench of magistrates sent a certain Methodist to gaol merely because he was impudent enough to say that he knew his sins were forgiven![1] For long Wesley himself seemed even to serious thinkers to be a misguided 'enthusiast,' or to use a twentieth-century phrase, a mere 'fanatic.' All this is now changed. To-day the claim of the Christian experience to be 'valid' is at least seriously considered. The publication of William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience* may be taken to mark the historical completion of this change. The book blent philosophy, science, and religion. When it was published, current literature bubbled over with congratulations to 'the religious world.' It was counted a great thing that a psychologist should take religion seriously. In reality, felicitations were rather due to 'the scientific world,' for having long claimed that it was *par excellence* the investigator of

[1] Wesley's *Journal* for June 25, 1745.

phenomena, it now awoke to the truth that there was a wide realm of phenomena that it had ignored !

This discovery, at least in the English-speaking world, followed from a certain movement in the story of science. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the chief interest of scientific men lay in the world of the inanimate. The publication of Newton's *Principia* is here the historic landmark. Then the chief interest of science moved to biology. Here the landmark is the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. As the nineteenth century wore on, however, the focus of interest again began to move, and to-day we live in as clearly a ' psychological ' era as the men of sixty years ago lived in a ' biological,' or those of two hundred years ago in an ' astronomical.'

The recognition of psychology as a science carried with it a certain change in the connotation of the term ' fact.' There was a time when even ' men of science ' thought that stones were ' facts ' but emotions were not, that books were ' facts ' but thoughts were not ; that, in brief, the so-called ' objective ' was ' fact ' but the so-called ' subjective ' was not. Here, of course, the man of science was frankly contradicted by the philosopher, but in those days science and philosophy had few dealings with each other. It is a commonplace now that the only proof that either the ' objective ' or the ' subjective ' exists, is that men think in these terms, and that the ' subjective ' therefore is just as much, or as little, ' matter of fact ' as the ' objective.' Indeed, the insufficiency and ambiguity of these terms is now so notorious that not a few careful writers avoid them altogether. It is universally allowed that there are ' psychological ' facts as well as ' physical,' or, to use older terms, that ' mind ' is fact as well as ' matter.' This being admitted, the claims of religion to present certain facts for examination could not long be disallowed. Clearly religious phenomena were not the least among the facts of psychology.

When anyone urges the criticism that the Christian experience is ' subjective,' he should be asked to define the term. The meaning just examined is far from the only one. Sometimes an experience is called ' subjective ' when it only occurs in a single mind. To use a commoner but less complimentary phrase, ' subjective ' is then used of ' individual

vagaries.' It is clear that the Christian experience is not ' subjective ' in this sense, for it belongs to multitudes of people, of many ages and lands. Again, ' subjectivism ' may be used as a synonym for ' solipsism.' The last term refers to the fact that there is no absolute proof that any given experience is the same in any two minds. Two men may both call a given recurrent experience ' blue,' but what proof is there that the one recurrent experience is the same as the other ? Here all ' live by faith.' This statement may appear obscure to some readers, but it is a commonplace of philosophy. Its exposition, however, is beyond the present purpose, and besides, there is no need to pursue the subject, for it is clear that the validity of the Christian experience stands, in relation to the claims of the solipsist, on the same ground as the claim to validity of all other experiences. The charge of ' subjectivism,' in this sense of the term, is not fatal to Christianity unless it be also fatal to all thinking whatsoever. It is not likely that there will ever be many theoretical solipsists, and there can never be any practical ones. For men can only live at all by constantly assuming that they share a common experience. Once more, ' subjective ' is sometimes used as the opposite of ' historical,' and it is suggested that the appeal of the Christian ought to be to history and not to experience. In reality his appeal is to both. While the full discussion of the appeal to history does not belong to the present purpose, it has been illustrated more than once above and is named again below.

It appears, then, that when the Christian experience is charged with ' subjectivism,' in most senses of that ambiguous term, it stands on the same ground as many other phenomena. The charge, therefore, has no peculiar gravamen when levelled against this particular instance of human experience. The general defence of ' experience ' against ' subjectivism ' falls to the idealistic philosopher, and not exclusively to the Christian thinker. Even when the charge is narrowed, and it is claimed that *religious* experience is in some distinctive way ' subjective,' every theist is as much involved as the Christian. Only when it is urged that the Christian's experience of fellowship *with Christ* is peculiarly ' subjective,' does the Christian apologist face a distinctive charge, and then it would be better expressed in different words. The claim is that when

the Christian says that he 'knows Christ,' he is deluded or mistaken. Here the defence is not yet fully drawn out, in part because the attack is not yet fully developed. A little is said on the subject at a later stage.

To some thinkers, again, the appeal to Christian experience seems to be peculiarly 'anthropomorphic.' This term too needs examination. It is plain that, in a certain sense, everything that man knows is 'anthropomorphic,'—in the Kantian sense, that for man there can be no 'fact' unless some man has thought it. On this ground a universal scepticism may be reared, as the history of the Kantian philosophy shows. But, if the 'findings' of the human mind be counted valid in other realms, there does not appear to be any good ground why they should be dismissed as 'delusions' when they happen to deal with religion, on the mere ground that they are in this sense 'anthropomorphic.'

Again, it is said that the Christian doctrine of God, in particular, is 'anthropomorphic' in the sense that 'man makes a God after his own image.' Here the question raised is not whether there is a God, but what He is like. Once again, it is true, in a given sense, of men's notions of everything that they are 'made in man's image.' 'Primitive man's' thoughts about animals 'made them in the image of men.' But, beginning with this crude notion, men gradually learnt in what ways animals are really like men, and in what ways they differ from men. And this procedure is reckoned valid and ultimately even scientific. Indeed, human knowledge about anything can only proceed by comparison; or, to use other words, men can only learn what anything new is like by comparing it with some other thing or things that they already know. And, as man's primary knowledge is of himself —since, as the psychologist so patiently explains, man's first knowledge is of his own body and mind, and of these two in combination—it follows that, in the last resort, men learn of all other things by comparison and contrast with their knowledge of themselves. They find, for instance, that a stone is like their own bodies in having weight and colour, that a plant is like themselves in having some sort of life, that animals are still more like them, yet that all these differ from them too. This is the normal and indeed the only way of human knowledge. Knowledge of God has grown in the same way. Men

began by thinking of ' gods ' as like them in most ways, or even in all. But, by process of thought and experience, they have learnt step by step in what ways God differs from man, and, *pari passu*, in what ways He is rightly thought of as like man. There does not seem to be any reason why this process should be invalid in the last instance, if it is valid in all others, though, here again, a universal scepticism is possible. Of course it might be said that God is more like some other object of human knowledge than like man himself. This has often been asserted. ' Gods,' for instance, have been compared rather to animals than men, as in many ancient mythologies. Or God may be thought of rather as an omnipotent Force than as a Heavenly Father, as in Herbert Spencer's speculations. But it is claimed by Christianity that apart from God Himself, man is the noblest being that man has knowledge of, and that therefore God is more likely to be like him than any other being. So the right starting-point for the discovery of God's nature is human nature. Of course a great discovery of difference follows. It is no accident that the final knowledge of God came only through the perfect Man, and that the Christian doctrine of God is ' Christomorphic ' rather than ' anthropomorphic.' But further, Christian thought predicates of God qualities such as immanence which it does not ascribe to Jesus when on earth. Even here it makes distinctions. How much more when God is compared to other men! Yet one similarity remains—God and man are both counted ' persons,' and ' personality ' is reckoned of supreme worth. This is perhaps the culminant instance of the use of ' value ' as a criterion of truth. God must be the out-soaring instance of the best that man conceives and is.

Some will now object, ' Well, but first you " make God in the image of man " and then you declare that " Man is made in the image of God " ; first you make a God that is human, and then of course you find it easy to discover that man is like Him ; you argue in a circle.' Is there here, however, anything more than a logomachy? A child learns what its father is like by comparison and contrast with its knowledge of itself ; may it not therefore go on later to learn that the truth is that it is like its father, rather than that its father is like it? To describe the process by which a fact is learnt is one thing ; to account for the fact is another. The

advocate of religion claims that there is a great Being, other than man, who is a Person, and in some ways therefore like man. When he comes to ask how their likeness originates, he finds it reasonable to hold that God is prototype and not man. So he declares that God ' made man in His own image.' It need not follow that God is a mere ' projection ' of human thought. There is a valid anthropomorphism.

C. THE CRITERIA OF VALIDITY

At the risk of a little partial repetition it may be well to recall some of the ways in which the specific claim of the Christian —that He has fellowship with God, defined and informed by fellowship with Christ, who is God-Man—is challenged. There are those who admit that the Christian experience is indeed an experience of God, but they deny that it is an experience of Christ. They say only that the Christian ' knows ' the God whom Christ revealed. Some of these are Unitarians of one type or another, others have fallen under the spell of Ritschlianism, in one or other of its forms. Some of the latter go on to suggest that, while Jesus gave the world the highest concept about God that has yet been reached, there may arise a teacher who will surpass Him. In this way the question is raised whether Christianity is the final religion. For those who believe without reservation that Christ is God, there can of course only be one answer. None can surpass or equal God. Theoretically it might be argued that God might again become incarnate, but none so argues, and Christianity find a place for what is of value in the idea, not by teaching that God will again become incarnate, but that the Incarnate Son will ' return ' to the world that He once for all perfectly redeemed. This is not the place to pursue further the implicates of the claim that Jesus was not and is not divine, at least in the full sense. It of course returns once more upon the old Christological controversy, and the writer looks for no result but the old one. No belief short of the full divinity of our Lord will satisfy the ' Christian consciousness ' of the twentieth century, any more than it satisfied that of the fourth. But again, there are Christian teachers to-day—and still more, there are many ' thoughtful young Christians '—whose ' working creed,'

as seen above,[1] really is that the Jesus who lived on earth was a man and not God ; that the Christ of their daily prayers is God and not a man ; yet that *somehow* these two are one. The mind cannot rest in this position. It inevitably demands some further account of the ' somehow.' In other words, it demands a theology. This school must either say more or less. It is the child of an age that loves both history and experience. It has fallen in love, therefore, both with the ' Jesus of history ' and with the ' Christ of experience.' This is well. There could be no better beginning for Christian thought, but it is a beginning and not an end.

It is probable that those who take this position, just in proportion as they try to elucidate their own thought, will find themselves driven either further to ' the left ' or back into ' orthodoxy.' Those who take the latter way will, indeed, have attained ' orthodoxy ' by their own path, and they may insist on using a partly new terminology, or in giving a new emphasis to the old terminology, but this process is good both for them and for ' orthodoxy.' It is with those who take the first path, and with the thinkers who have already reached its goal—with those who say that the Christian experience is of fellowship with God and not of fellowship with Christ, that Christ was merely human or at any rate was not fully God, and that His religion may yet be superseded—it is with these that the Christian apologist will in the near future have peculiarly to do. Here lies his own battle, in two senses. First, other defenders of theism and idealism are not here of necessity his allies. Second, if he lose this battle, it will follow that through nearly two millenniums Christianity has been giving a wrong account of itself and of Christ. Christ at length will be discovered to be, not the sun, but only the first of the planets. To vary the metaphor, Christianity will turn out to be not ' God's last word,' but ' His last word so far.' Throughout the ages God has put men to the test of mental struggle, as well as to other tests. He is doing so still. The psychology which was the ally of Christianity yesterday, will be its critic to-morrow.

For this struggle the lists are not yet fully set. As already suggested, the psychological attack is only now being drawn out. In consequence, the Christian reply cannot yet be fully

[1] p. 173.

formulated. The battle may easily absorb a generation of thinkers. Yet a preliminary question may be asked and a preliminary demand made. The *question* is, ' What are the proper criteria for judging the validity of that which is peculiar in the Christian experience ? ' The *demand* is that the same criteria shall be used here as in investigating the truth of similar phenomena. The Christian can neither ask for nor admit peculiar tests of truth.

Roughly speaking, three criteria of truth, or sets of criteria, may be distinguished. These are the criteria proper to history, to science, and to philosophy respectively. All three are needed fully to investigate the Christian claim. Historical criteria are not merely pertinent to the investigation of the historical facts of Jesus' life on earth, but to the claim that His Resurrection is historical fact. There is no need to recall how long and fierce a controversy has raged round this last. Sometimes, however, a kind of proof has been demanded for it that is not proper to historical investigation. Whateley's famous pamphlet *Historical Doubts concerning Napoleon Bonaparte* illustrated this for the early nineteenth century. One sometimes surmises that another such pamphlet is overdue. It is admitted, for instance, that discrepancies in accounts of the details of historical events—for example, of the Battle of Waterloo, the Stigmata of Francis, or the story of Socrates—are not fatal to the historicity of the events, and may even support it. Yet it is asserted that the Resurrection of Jesus cannot be historical unless the details of the accounts of the different witnesses dovetail.

Again, so far as the Christian claim is based upon psychological phenomena, the proper criteria for judging its validity are scientific. Now science, as such, has fulfilled its task when it has accurately described and classified phenomena. Some would add ' explained,' and there is no need to object to the addition if the scientific meaning of ' explanation ' is remembered. For the ' explanations ' of science are in reality only epitomes of its descriptions. The law of gravitation, for instance, does not tell us *why* material bodies ' attract ' each other, but only *that* they do. In other words, the law of gravitation is an epitome of many millions of phenomena. In some instances science begins from the records of a few trained observers, but in others its starting-point is the

experience of a multitude of common men. If it examines the group of phenomena ' blue things,' for instance, it begins from the fact that a multitude of men say, ' This and this and this are blue.' The testimony, be it observed, is not universal —for some men are born blind and others colour-blind—but it is very common. When psychological phenomena are being examined, appeal is usually made both to the trained observer and to common experience. The trained observer collects and examines the ' experiences ' of a number of ' ordinary ' folk. He knows quite well that in their accounts of their own experiences they will unwittingly mingle description with explanation. For instance, a large number of people, if asked to describe a dawn that they had witnessed, would, even to-day, say, ' We saw the sun rise,' yet they themselves know quite well that the phrase combines the description of a real experience with a false explanation of it. Scientifically they ought to say, ' We saw the earth turning,' for the sun does not move. Men have here epitomized a recurrent experience wrongly. There are many millions of people who say, ' We know God,' yet, if they go on to say what they find that experience to be, they cease to agree with each other and sometimes even to be consistent with themselves. The question at once arises, ' How much of this is experience, and how much is explanation ? ' And, to come nearer, ' Is it experience or explanation when men say even so much as " We know *God*," or " We know *Christ* " ? ' Is the last word, in each case, an epitome of experiences, and, if so, is it a correct epitome ? It is clear that such questions cannot be answered until there is some agreement about the earlier questions, ' What are the criteria of psychological truth ? What is the test of the validity of psychological phenomena ? And of the reality of that which is " objective " in these phenomena ? ' There is as yet no agreement among psychologists about the answers. Some of them say that they have nothing to do either with the assertion of ' objectivity ' or with its denial. Then they have nothing to do with the ' objectivity ' of God in the religious experience or of Christ in the Christian experience. The first duty of the theologian is to take the psychologist on his own ground and to say, ' What is your test of the reality of psychological phenomena ? When that question is answered, we will go on to ask whether the religious man's experience of God,

and the Christian man's experience of Christ, answer to the test.' For the opponent of Christianity on the ground of psychology may seek to apply to the Christian claim criteria which are not applied to other psychological phenomena, and which indeed are not pertinent in that field. Meanwhile, the 'ordinary Christian' may rest content to hold by his experience, secure that, just as the discovery of the old and universal error about 'sunrise' did not rob men of the sun, so no discovery of mistake in his usual way of stating his experience will rob him of God or of Christ. The controversy about the 'man born blind' in the Fourth Gospel is not the only one in which a 'wayfaring man' may take his part with the declaration, 'This one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.'

But the philosopher has his criteria of truth as well as the historian and the scientist. Ultimately, indeed, his criteria are criteria *par excellence*, for his specific question is, 'What is truth?' Yet, here again there is to-day no agreement about criteria. There are nearly as many tests of truth as there are philosophers! Indeed, a difference in philosophy is almost equivalent to a difference in tests of truth, and there seems, at first sight, to 'the intelligent outsider,' as if there were at present a very medley of philosophies. Whether beneath the appearance of confusion there is not true progress need not now be discussed. For among Christian thinkers—that is, Christians who are also philosophers—it is possible to trace a fairly wide measure of agreement. As already seen,[1] they accept some form of 'idealism,' and such a form as admits both 'intellectual' and 'pragmatic' tests of truth. It may be admitted at once that 'materialism' in philosophy is fatal to Christianity, but, if tried by other than materialistic criteria, it claims to stand.

It will now perhaps be clear that in order to prove the 'validity' of the Christian experience for the 'mind of to-day,' it is first necessary that the 'mind of to-day' come far nearer than it has yet done to defining its criteria of truth. It is impossible, even for a Christian apologist, to satisfy a demand so long as those who make the demand do not themselves clearly know what the demand is. Christian apologetics are like the chameleon! They have continually to suit

[1] pp. 109 f.

themselves to their environment! They are also like the fabled Phœnix—from the ashes of one controversy they spring to life in the next. Undoubtedly the slowly clearing 'thought of to-day' already begins to demand a new Christian apologetic, but the apologetic inevitably waits upon the process of the clearing of the thought. Meanwhile, the Christian philosopher may confidently make a demand in his turn—that the Christian 'phenomena' shall be tried by the same criteria, historical, psychological and philosophic, as similar 'phenomena'—and no other. For the rest, he must wait, and to wait aright tempers the steel of character. 'He that believeth shall not make haste.' A slightly different part falls to the 'ordinary' Christian. It is for him to stand by his facts. As the 'ordinary' man, through all the changes in optical science, has stood by the assertion, 'I do see, and there is a sun,' or, as through all the history of medicine and chemistry he has maintained, 'I do hunger, and there is such a thing as food,' or, as through all the gropings of psychology he still maintains, 'I do love, and there is such a thing as home,' or, as amid all the revolutions of metaphysics he does not abate the claim, 'I do think, and "things" do exist that answer to my thoughts,' so he may say confidently, 'I do worship, and there is such a one as God.' And, with a difference, the 'ordinary' Christian may make similar ground for his particular claim among theists that he not only 'knows God' but 'knows Christ.'

The difference is that the experience is not so nearly universal as those just quoted. A moment's thought will show that this need not be fatal to the Christian claim. For instance, though many millions of men have never seen the sea or had any experience of the tides, the multitudes who have these experiences are right in holding by their truth. Their forefathers too were right in declaring that there were tides, even though science could then give no explanation of them. Multitudes of men and women assert rightly, 'We do fall in love,' even though others have no such experience, and even though psychology has not yet reduced the phenomenon to science! A considerable number of people assert, and assert rightly, that there is a mathematical truth named 'the Differential Calculus,' even though many other people do not even dimly know what the phrase means—nor ever could be

led to know—and even though mathematicians themselves still differ on some of the problems of the theory of numbers. Similarly, the ' ordinary ' Christians, in their multitudes, may claim, ' Even though there are many other men who have no experience of the fellowship of Christ, and even though this experience raises unsolved problems, yet we do " know Him and the power of His resurrection." ' No doubt there have been widespread errors among men—though none of them has ever been altogether error—but one by one they are discovered as they are put to the proofs of human life. Probably nothing in the history of man has been put more fully and variously to proof than the Christian claim to ' know Christ.' Let it be put—it is being put—to other tests. We ask only that the scales be not weighted against it. Meanwhile, as the tests which it has passed multiply, it grows more and more probable that it is true, and as Butler taught, ' probability is the very guide of life.' Or, to use older and simpler words, the Christian still ' lives by faith.' So we return to our starting-point. There is a proper place for philosophy in life, but it is not by metaphysics that men and women *live*. They are bound to take life ' on trust ' ; all that they can do is to choose whom they will trust. The Christian chooses Christ.

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